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ABSTRACT

This resource guide is designed to bring together information and resources on career preparation for students with disabilities in Florida's schools. The intended audience includes special and vocational teachers and administrators who have an interest in improving outcomes for students with disabilities within their districts. Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the School Improvement and Accountability initiative, the Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) report, and Florida's Blueprint for Career Preparation. It describes the relationship of these overarching concepts to one another. Chapter 2 provides an overview of vocational assessment and programming at both the secondary and postsecondary levels for students with a wide range of disabilities. Chapter 3 defines and describes the process of planning for students in transition from school to community living. Chapter 4 provides the reader with a way to access labor market information. Following each chapter is a description of promising practices related to the information contained in that chapter. Many of these are descriptions of actual vocational programs in school districts. The resource section in the back of the document is a guide to human and material resources available from state agencies. (YLB)

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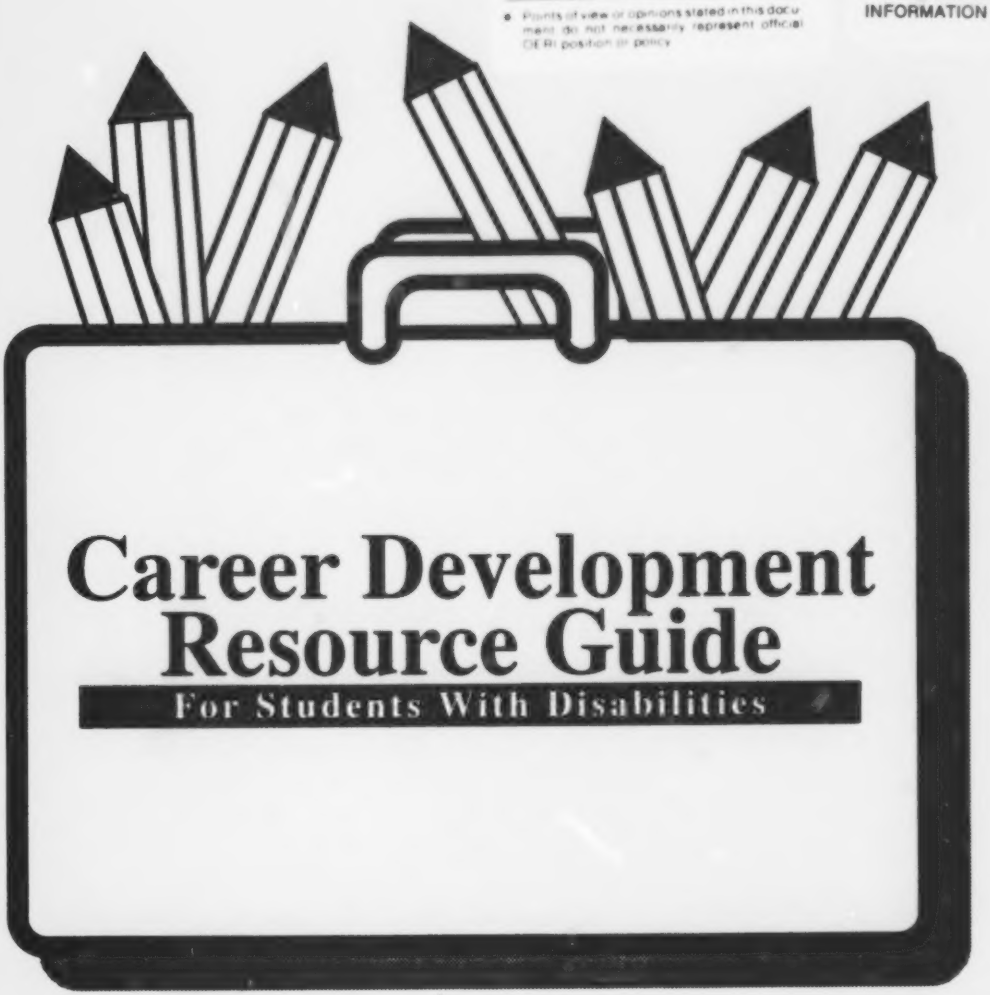

# Career Development Resource Guide

## For Students With Disabilities

Bureau of Vocational Programs and Services
Bureau of Career Development and Educational Improvement
Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education
and
Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students
Division of Public Schools

CE 065 379

19 Florida Department of Education 93

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# CAREER DEVELOPMENT
# RESOURCE GUIDE
## For Students With Disabilities

Bureau of Vocational Programs and Services
Bureau of Career Development and Educational Improvement
Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education and
Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students
Division of Public Schools
Florida Department of Education
1993

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# CAREER DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE GUIDE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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## PREFACE

This technical assistance report was developed to bring together information and resources on career preparation for students with disabilities. This report was designed to provide teachers and administrators with knowledge about basic concepts as well as promising practices in career preparation to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This technical assistance report was a collaborative effort, involving special educators and vocational educators at the state, district, and school levels throughout Florida. Special thanks are due to the authors and reviewers for their valuable input toward the final product.

# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Resource Guide is to bring together information and resources on career preparation for students with disabilities in Florida's schools. The importance of this topic has been emphasized at the national level through *America 2000*. The U.S. Department of Labor has further reinforced the need for information and resources in this area through the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) Report. The Florida Legislature, Commissioner of Education Betty Castor, and the School Improvement and Accountability Commission have adopted the *America* 2000 goals and the SCANS competencies as the basis for school improvement in Florida. They have established education goals as part of *Blueprint 2000* that include the following goal related to graduation rate and readiness for postsecondary education and employment: "Students graduate and are prepared to enter the workforce and postsecondary education." One strategy for implementation of these bold steps is the *Blueprint for Career Preparation*. The ramifications of the initiatives and issues mentioned above are especially significant for students with disabilities. Because of their disabilities, these students are even more at risk for unemployment and underemployment, and have traditionally not accessed postsecondary education and training opportunities.

The information in this guide covers a wide range of topics and is derived from many sources. Special educators and vocational educators at the state and district levels in small and large school districts, have all contributed. It is not intended to be read like a novel, but rather as a reference document for persons interested in career preparation for students with disabilities.

The guide is organized as follows: Chapter one introduces the reader to the *School Improvement and Accountability* initiative, the SCANS report, and the Blueprint for Career Preparation; and it describes the relationship of these over-arching concepts to one other. Chapter two provides an overview of vocational assessment and programming at both the secondary and postsecondary levels for students with a wide range of disabilities. Chapter three defines and describes the process of planning for students in transition from school to community living. Chapter four provides the reader with a way to access labor market information. Following each chapter is a description of promising practices related to the information contained in that chapter. (Many of these are descriptions of actual vocational programs in school districts.) The Resource section in the back of the document is a guide to human and material resources available from state agencies.

The intended audience of this report includes special and vocational teachers and administrators who have an interest in improving outcomes for students with disabilities within their districts. The individual articles, resource lists, and contact information are all intended to provide these stakeholders with the tools to build a better future for students with disabilities.

## CHAPTER 1

## THE BLUEPRINT FOR CAREER PREPARATION

The evidence is overwhelming that America is losing its competitive edge in the global economy. The reason most often cited is that our workforce is unprepared for the changing, highly technological workplace. According to *Business Week* (September 19, 1988), more than three-quarters of this country's new employees through the year 2000 will have deficient verbal and writing skills, with less than one in four being able to operate at required levels. Therefore, we are facing a monumental mismatch between jobs and the ability of Americans to function in them.

The *Blueprint for Career Preparation* is Florida's link between education and economics. Betty Castor, Florida Commissioner of Education, said, "We must change the way we do business in education... because business is depending on it. In fact, our entire economic survival is depending on it." The *Blueprint* outlines a program to ensure that Florida schools accomplish the fundamental *Blueprint* goal:

> **Students graduating from Florida's public schools shall be prepared to begin a career and continue their education at a postsecondary technical school, community college, or university.**

The *Blueprint* is a guide for preparing all students, including students with disabilities, to succeed in the competitive global marketplace. It is a complex matrix for systemwide and organizational change with all levels of education--kindergarten through postsecondary--being affected. Fortunately, in Florida many key elements are already in place to accomplish the overall mission of the *Blueprint*. Four major programs--public schools, vocational centers, community colleges, and universities--have the potential to prepare Florida's workforce. The *Blueprint* encourages better coordination between these components with the Department of Education supporting it by providing leadership, seeking legislation, expanding partnerships, and providing technical assistance.

### Implementation of the *Blueprint*

Districts that choose to participate in the *Blueprint* receive funding for a four-year cycle as a pilot effort. In the first year, planning and staff development occur. Actual implementation begins in the second year. The remaining two years are for further refining of strategies and expansion of the program district-wide. The *Blueprint* does not mandate activities that must be carried out, so the emphasis is on local decision making to assess needs and determine strategies. Components that should be addressed include staff development, technology awareness, integration of academic and vocational education, cooperative planning, applied teaching strategies, career awareness, articulation, family involvement, and meaningful involvement of the business and community. The basic process for implementing the *Blueprint* may be as follows:

1. Identify needs and current resources.

2. Formulate steering committee for school improvement/*Blueprint* that includes representation from the community and parents.

3. Develop a plan based on a goal with specific strategies related to student outcomes.

4. Develop evaluation procedures.

The *Blueprint* goals focus on student competencies by grade levels. (A list of Blueprint goals and a summary of activities may be found on pages 6-7 ).

**Key Areas**

The *Blueprint* has five key areas for improving student performance: self-esteem, career planning, technology awareness, the integration of vocational and academic activities, and articulation between feeder-pattern elementary and middle school, and high school, and high school and postsecondary institution. The *Blueprint* pilot sites are developing materials and programs to implement activities in each area.

- Self-Esteem: Self-esteem is fundamental to the *Blueprint*. At the elementary level, *Insights*, a circle-style communications program, is being piloted to enhance self-awareness, self-esteem, and career awareness. It helps children deal with matters such as improving their learning habits, taking pride in their accomplishments, dealing rationally with disappointments and problems, and making decisions. The secondary companion piece is called *Impact* and has 11 components, including setting goals, solving problems, resolving conflicts, and taking responsibility. The processes and supporting materials are designed for use in all curriculum areas by all teachers. Staff development and training in these programs are available through the Bureau of Career Development and Educational Improvement.

- Career and Education Planning: Florida's career and education planning system is called *Pathways to Your Future*. This system has been designed to assist students in setting tentative career goals and developing an educational plan to achieve those goals. Students begin the process during their middle school years and continue it into adulthood. There is a strong focus on family/education partnerships.

- Technology Awareness: Awareness of our technological world and each individual's place in that world is an important theme that runs throughout the career development process. Technology education activities for elementary schools are being developed as a part of the *Blueprint*. These hands - on activities emphasize problem solving and thinking skills using technology. The activities increase students' awareness of the world of technology and provide valuable opportunities to apply critical academic skills in challenging situations.

- Applied Academics: Applied academics or the integration of academic and vocational skills is one of the strategies for implementing the *Blueprint for Career Preparation*. Academic and vocational teachers work together to ensure that academic skills are highlighted as they are used in vocational activities and careers and the world of work are related to activities in academic classes. A variety of teaching techniques and curriculum materials are used to make learning more relevant and meaningful to all students in their academic and vocational classes.

●Articulation Articulation is the connection between one level of education and the next. *Blueprint* sites identify teams from feeder-pattern schools to focus on transition from one school to the next and reinforce the sense of continuity in programs such as career development that carry over from one level to the next. Counties are looking closely at articulation from high school to postsecondary levels, developing programs with course credit that can carry from high school to vo-tech center or community college, and vo-tech center and community college to a university.

## The Relationship of *Blueprint* and School Improvement

School improvement is a belief, a process, and an outcome. The first *belief* is that all children can learn. The second is that the people who are responsible for instruction should make decisions about that instruction. Third is that the world is changing, and schools must be able to change to keep up with the world. The *process* is a broad-based decision making model. The model includes representatives of all of the partners in schools: parents, community, teachers and counselors, noninstructional staff, administrators, and students. These partners form the school improvement team, in some districts called the School Advisory Council. This group oversees the planning and implementation process. Most important of all school improvement is an *outcome*. The outcome is improved student performance. Trends in employment say that students need more than a high school diploma, but less than a baccalaureate degree to enter the fastest growing, best paying jobs. Our students will face constant change in the workplace. Not only will they need some form of postsecondary education, they will also need lifelong learning skills.

The Florida Legislature established the Education Reform and Accountability Commission in 1991, co-chaired by Betty Castor, Commissioner of Education, and Buddy MacKay, Lieutenant Governor. The purpose of this commission is to provide leadership as Florida moves to an educational system that allows more control and accountability at the local level. Each school in Florida has developed a School Improvement Plan for the 1992-93 school year, designed to achieve the state education goals and student performance standards and based on a needs assessment. Florida's Seven Goals for Education are as follows:

1. Readiness to Start School. Communities and schools collaborate to prepare children and families for children's success in school.
2. Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment. Students graduate and are prepared to enter the workforce and postsecondary education.
3. Student Performance. Students successfully compete at the highest levels nationally and internationally and are prepared to make well-reasoned, thoughtful, and healthy lifelong decisions.
4. Learning Environment. School boards provide a learning environment conducive to teaching and learning that includes sequential instruction in mathematics, science, reading, writing, and the social sciences and appropriate educational materials, equipment, and pupil/teacher ratio.
5. School Safety and Environment. Communities provide an environment that is drug-free and protects students' health, safety, and civil rights

6. Teachers and Staff. The schools, districts and state ensure professional teachers and staff.
7. Adult Literacy. Adult Floridians are literate and have the knowledge and skills needed to compete in the global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

The planning process for school improvement has several steps. First is the vision. The school verbalizes its vision of the very best it can be. Then, using the seven goals in the accountability/school improvement/Blueprint 2000 legislation, schools write goals to help reach that vision. Conducting a needs assessment is an essential step in this process. In this step, schools create a detailed picture of the current status in every program or area that the schools want to address. Planning comes next. The school, with its partners, identifies strategies to reach the goals it has chosen to work on. Strategies in every area of a school may be considered from instructional and professional climate, to discipline and positive learning environment. After the strategies are selected, training, curriculum development, or materials may be needed. Implementation and evaluation follow.

The *Blueprint for Career Preparation* is based on much of the same research as the school improvement initiative. The *Blueprint* uses the same philosophy, model, and outcomes. The difference is that the *Blueprint* focuses the improvement strategies on career development competencies and development of interdisciplinary teaching. Several of the goals of school improvement may be achieved through successful *Blueprint* planning. Below are some examples of how the *Blueprint* relates to achievement of school improvement goals.

Goal 2: Graduation rate and readiness for postsecondary education and employment.
The *Blueprint* has this goal as its main focus.

Goal 3: Student performance.
The *Blueprint* has several strategies for improving student achievement: enhanced self esteem, applied teaching, learning styles, problem solving, and critical thinking. Also included are parent involvement strategies.

Goal 4: Learning environment.
The *Blueprint* stresses articulation between schools, including postsecondary, as well as sequencing in course work. Career development student competencies are sequenced and complement developmental guidance programs. *Blueprint* classroom strategies emphasize creating environments conducive to learning and the sound use of technology. The applied curriculum is carefully sequenced. The Tech Prep program provides for articulation between high schools and community colleges, stresses careful attention to the content of courses at both institutions to eliminate repetition, and rewards rigorous requirements.

Goal 6: Teachers and staff.
*Blueprint* in-service activities provide extensive opportunities for professional development.

Many mechanisms are in place for schools that choose to combine planning for school improvement and the *Blueprint*. Of primary importance is the formation of the planning team. If the *Blueprint* plan is going to be used as the school improvement plan, or as part of it, the planning needs to be done by or overseen by the school improvement team.

## The Relationship of the *Blueprint* and the SCANS Report

In developing guidelines for Goals 2 and 3, the Commission has used the Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) Report, "What Work Requires of Schools - A SCANS Report for America 2000." The report addressed results of a national study of skills needed at the workplace in order for American business and government to compete globally. The SCANS Report divides skills into three foundation skill areas and five competency areas. These are as follows:

Three-part foundation
    Basic Skills: Reads, writes, performs arithmetic and mathematical operations, listens and speaks
    Thinking Skills: Thinks creatively, makes decisions, solves problems, visualizes, knows how to learn, and reasons
    Personal Qualities: Displays responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity, and honesty

Five competencies
    Resources: Identifies, organizes, plans, and allocates resources
    Interpersonal: Works well with others
    Information: Acquires and uses information well
    Systems: Understands complex inter-relationships
    Technology: Works with a variety of technologies

The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) Report , released in June 1991, recommended requisite student competencies and foundations for successful entry into the work place. Florida has initiated these competencies and foundations within the *Blueprint for Career Preparation*. The *Blueprint* is implemented across a single feeder-pattern (elementary, middle, high school, and vocational technical centers between which students are promoted) within a district over grades kindergarten through postsecondary. Teachers, parents, business people, and administrators plan, deliver, and evaluate new approaches to school curriculum and instruction using the goals and strategies of the *Blueprint*. As these strategies are proven, they are expanded to other district schools. The essential components of curriculum change are increasing emphasis on technology, demonstrating the relevancy of the subject to the real world, using problems to apply and extend subject content, and breaking the barriers between vocational and academic instruction and between academic instructional areas. The delivery of learning is restructured so teachers become facilitators and classroom managers, student team organizers, providers of information resources, presenters of problems, and connectors with real individual, social, technological, and economic issues. Business and community partners bring real - world issues and perspectives to the classroom. Students become more self-directed, responsible, and team-oriented. They learn because connectivity is apparent and complex solutions require higher - order skills.

*Blueprint* schools focus on the elimination of lower-level general courses and tracts. Higher student expectations are encouraged, particularly in mathematics, science, and communication. Employability skills, self-esteem concepts, and interpersonal techniques are developed from kindergarten through 12th grade.

| OBJECTIVES | ACTIVITIES |
|---|---|
| Grades K-5<br>Students should have a career development program which infuses self, career, and technology awareness activities into the curriculum | • Technology awareness activities are infused into the curriculum and emphasize math and science applications<br>• "Best Practices in Career Development," "Insights," and "Elementary Technology Learning Activities" are published and training provided.<br>• Career and self-awareness activities are conducted by counselors and teachers in the classrooms and often entail a field trip to business/industry. |
| Grade 6<br>Students should have a program of personal assessment and technological literacy instruction. | • The exploratory wheel is implemented at this level. Careers are explored in every occupational cluster. Technology is also explored, using mathematics, physical science, and problem-solving concepts. |
| Grades 7-8<br>Students should identify goals for which they are striving. Goals may change as further experiences are obtained. Four-year plans for grades 9-12 should be developed with input from students, families, and school personnel. The plans should be evaluated at least annually and revised as requirements change or students' goals become better defined. | • Exploratory wheel is implemented with technology education as a key spoke.<br>• The 8th Grade Career and Education Planner is completed during these two years with parents, counselors, and teachers culminating in a 4-year high school curriculum which addresses the students' career aspirations.<br>• Career guidance and counseling activities are enhanced |
| Grades 9-12<br>Students should complete high school with the competence to continue to postsecondary education and to enter the workforce. The strengthening of basic skills through applied learning should be a major component of both academic and vocational instruction. | • Academic and vocational teachers plan together to deliver instruction which focuses upon common required student competencies.<br>• Through the integration of academic and vocational curriculum, the vocational curriculum results in higher math, science, and communication skills and reducing general education courses.<br>• Increased emphasis on guidance advisement to establish higher student performance goals |

| OBJECTIVES | ACTIVITIES |
|---|---|
| Postsecondary<br>Students should complete postsecondary education programs which enable them to successfully enter the world of work, maintain competence in current employment, advance within their occupational fields, or change occupations. | • Students receive integrated career and educational advisement at postsecondary institutions resulting in a plan which addresses both academic and occupational goals.<br>• Instructional technology is utilized to increase the relevancy of content and presentation.<br>• Increased articulation allows the transfer of credit. |
| Business Partnerships K-Community<br>All levels of education should intensify efforts to share information with the intent of involving parents, business/industry and the community in the process of educating students and supporting Florida's economy. | • Business and education coalitions infuse Technology Education. Over 500 business and education leaders developed a State of Florida Technology Education Implementation Plan K-Adult.<br>• Career shadowing-Students have the opportunity to visit local businesses and industries to gain occupational information.<br>• Parent workshops<br>• Mentoring Programs |

# PROMISING PRACTICES RELATED TO THE BLUEPRINT FOR CAREER PREPARATION

- EXAMPLES OF BLUEPRINT ACTIVITIES RELATED TO SCANS

## Examples Of Blueprint Activities Related To SCANS

### *Elementary Level - the "Today Show" Activity*

Every morning the students produce a "Today Show" in which every student participates some time during the school year. The media center is used as a mini-television production studio. The format includes announcements and messages by the school principal; a presentation by business, industry or a civic group; advertisement for school activities (such as carnivals, school plays, etc.); school lunch menu for the day with a nutritional report on each meal; a career for the day presented by a student who describes the job, education requirements, salary, working conditions, and tools; and finally, a goal for the day. The children write the scripts, arrange cameras and lighting, prepare the program agenda, solicit program presenters, do the makeup and fashion coordination, and provide follow-up to each program (such as thank-you notes for presenters and an evaluation/ debriefing by the students who participated on what parts of the program were smooth and successful and what portions needed to be revised for the next day). All academic areas (math, science, social studies, and communications) are used in the production. Teachers use the "Today Show" to demonstrate specific academic competencies each day. The school counselor utilizes the show to promote self-and career awareness.

### *Middle School Level*

Many middle schools integrate their curriculum around two-to three-week projects, using group learning processes. In one project, students survey the school grounds and facilities. The math teacher addresses geometry competencies related to angles and lines, the science teacher addresses the geology of the region, the social studies teacher addresses the types of architecture that the land can support and the effect physical geography has on the region, the communications teacher works with the students to write the survey report, and the counselor uses this project as a career development activity to present information on careers.

### *High School Level - Aquiculture*

Citrus High School is developing an aquiculture program which unites the strengths of two disciplines that are normally considered to be worlds apart: agriculture and biology. Students are setting up two parallel growing areas: one to grow food fish (striped bass) to sell to commercial buyers, and the other to breed and grow tropical fish for sale to jobbers and retailers. These state-of-the-art facilities are developed in consultation with university researchers in aquiculture. Each discipline will be responsible for various aspects of the project. For example, agriculture students will work in feeding, equipment maintenance, and recycling while biology students will monitor water quality and various gas levels necessary for fish development. In addition to the obvious subject content gain of each student, they also learn to work cooperatively, respect each other, and connect academics. An increased understanding of other disciplines and entrepreneurial skills is also an outcome.

For more information about the *Blueprint for Career Preparation* and the materials listed above contact:

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Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400
(904)488-0400, Suncom 278-0400 or Toll Free 800-342-9271Florida
Department of Education

# CHAPTER 2

# VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES

The articles in this chapter represent a wide range of innovative vocational programs and services for students with disabilities at both the secondary and postsecondary levels.

The overall purpose of vocational education is to prepare individuals for employment. To reach this outcome, vocational programs, services, and activities are designed to enable students to make meaningful and informed occupational choices, develop employability and job specific skills, and increase their self-esteem. This is especially important for students with disabilities, who are traditionally unemployed or underemployed at a higher rate than their nondisabled peers. Vocational education plays a key role in the career preparation continuum for students with disabilities, from initial recruitment through assessment and program planning and placement, to transition and job placement.

Vocational education is for all students and includes exploratory courses, practical arts courses, job preparatory programs, and supplemental programs in a wide variety of occupational areas. The occupational program areas include Agribusiness and Natural Resources Education, Business Education, Diversified Occupations Education, Health Occupations Education, Home Economics Education, Industrial Education, Marketing Education, Public Service Occupations Education, Technology Education, and Special Needs Programs.

Throughout the years, a variety of programs and services have been developed and implemented in the context of vocational and special education to meet the individual vocational training needs of students with disabilities. Programs include mainstreamed classes with adaptations and special services, separate special classes with modified curriculum and instructional strategies, and on-the-job training in the community. Special services include counseling, interpreters and tutors, transition planning, and job placement.

In the following sections, you will find a summary of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1990; an overview of vocational assessment and curriculum-based vocational assessment; a description of the cooperative consultation model used to mainstream students into vocational activities; information about different types of community-based vocational instruction designed for students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities; a description of the Zolley Maynard Sr. Education for Disabled Adults Program; and a description of services provided to students with disabilities in community colleges. Following these summaries are examples of promising practices from school districts and community colleges in Florida.

## Overview of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1990

The 1990 Perkins Amendments, part of the national educational reform effort, included significant changes in the way federal dollars were directed to meet the needs of students in vocational education. The new law targeted special populations, including students with disabilities, and replaced "set-asides" with stronger assurances. The federal dollars match population density in this Act; thus, funds must be directed to the schools/programs with the greatest need and the highest concentration of students who are members of special populations.

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1990, P.L. 101-392, was signed into law September 25, 1991. The purpose of this Act is "to make the United States more competitive in the world economy by developing more fully the academic and occupational skills of all segments of the population" (P.L. 101-392, Section 2). In order to achieve this purpose, the following goals are addressed in the legislation: (1) increasing the participation of special-needs students in vocational education; (2) improving the quality of vocational programs in schools with the greatest need; (3) raising the educational achievement of students, including members of special populations; and (4) ensuring that vocational education students have the skills necessary to work in a technologically advanced society.

The new law focuses on flexibility, accessibility, and accountability at the local level, with more dollars flowing through directly to local education agencies (LEAs). The LEAs include the school districts, community colleges, and the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind. There are no longer set-asides for students with disabilities; however, the law requires accessibility for target populations (including students with disabilities) to high quality programs free of barriers. The law includes assurances that address coordinated interagency planning; equal access in recruitment, enrollment, and placement activities; the provision of special supplementary services, guidance and counseling; transition services; and compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Local applications for federal vocational funds must include descriptions of how coordinated planning among vocational education, exceptional student education, and vocational rehabilitation will occur and how the special needs of targeted populations will be met.

The law focuses on accountability through the development and implementation of statewide systems of performance standards and measures. Accountability is also addressed through monitoring and technical assistance activities designed to assist LEAs in their efforts to expand and improve vocational programs and services.

There is a continuing need for close interagency working relationships and communication at the state and local levels in order to implement programs and services that meet the special needs of individuals with disabilities in vocational education.

Examples of promising practices in vocational education for students with disabilities at the secondary and postsecondary levels may be found beginning on page 33.

## Vocational Assessment: State Overview

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University of South Florida

### *Introduction*

For most of this century, professionals and consumers in business, industry, and rehabilitation have recognized the value of vocational assessment in career decision-making and career preparation. Impetus for the initiation or expansion of vocational assessment services in public school and community college settings resulted from recent proactive legislation, litigation, and professional movements regarding disabled and disadvantaged populations. The Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational, Adult, and Community Education, Special Needs Section, responded to the need for personnel preparation through training activities that provide awareness, knowledge, skills, and competencies related to vocational assessment and vocational evaluation. The Vocational/Work Evaluation Project, University of South Florida, provided a diversity of statewide training and technical assistance activities related to methods, processes, procedures, interpretation, and use of assessment information. The Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment (CBVA) Initiative was also facilitated through the University of South Florida. Orientation sessions, on-site technical assistance, regional meetings, supportive materials, and personnel training provide school-based personnel with additional assessment options. As a result, school district personnel have become more cognizant of the role vocational assessment plays in the educational, career, and life planning process.

### *Legislative Precedents*

P.L. 94-142, The Education for all Handicapped Children Act of 1975, set the stage for requiring assessment, stressing the use of assessment results in planning educational programs and services for students with disabling conditions. In 1984, The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, P.L. 98-524, provided assurances, consistent with vocational assessment requirements, for disabled and disadvantaged students. The law states that "each student who enrolls in vocational education programs...shall receive assessment of the interests, abilities, and special needs of such students with respect to successfully completing the vocational education program." "Special needs" is interpreted broadly to include: learning styles; visual or auditory aids; adaptive devices, modification in the environment, curriculum, or instructional materials; and support for students with language differences. This Act mandated vocational assessment, career counseling, and planning for transition from school to work.

In 1990, P.L.101-392, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, P.L.101-476, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), formerly The Education of the Handicapped Act, and P.L. 101-336, Americans with Disabilities Act provided further support for the need for student-centered vocational assessment services within educational settings.

### *Terminology*

The terms "vocational assessment" and "vocational evaluation" are often confused or interchanged. They are defined here to assist with process development. A comprehensive vocational assessment includes vocational evaluation with medical, psychological, educational, and other evaluation information such as work-related behaviors, family network, and community resources.

Vocational assessment is defined by the Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association (VEWAA), the primary organization for the advancement of the profession as "...a comprehensive process conducted over a period of time, involving a multidisciplinary team...with the purpose of identifying individual characteristics, education, training, and placement needs which provide educators the basis for planning an individual's vocational program and providing the individual with insight into his or her vocational potential."

Vocational evaluation, although similar, is defined as "...a comprehensive process that systematically utilizes work, either real or simulated, as the focal point for assessment and vocational exploration, the purpose of which is to assist individuals in vocational development. Vocational evaluation incorporates medical, psychological, social, vocational, educational, cultural, and economic data into the process to attain the goals of evaluation."

### *Best Practices*

Vocational assessment and vocational evaluation procedures considered best practices today are those that are ongoing, periodic, and extensive. Aspects of career/vocational assessment should begin as early as kindergarten, with awareness activities, and continue to evolve over one's entire school career. School-based programs may include career exploration wheels, vocational training programs, curriculum materials, multimedia presentations, guest speakers, "shadowing" experiences, simulated work samples, and formal or informal assessment procedures from which to gather longitudinal and accurate information. Community-based work experiences such as on-the-job-training, job tryouts, individual site-placements with a job coach, enclaves with site-based support, and situational assessment in sheltered work settings provide additional employability information. Home and family-based information is also valuable to the total assessment process; an unstructured, unplanned activity may provide critical information, not observed in the specified assessment areas. These observations could be critical to the interdisciplinary team in developing appropriate career plans and making vocational training decisions.

### *Interdisciplinary Team Approach*

Optimum results are obtained with an interdisciplinary team approach that includes all related personnel such as special educators, vocational educators, vocational rehabilitation counselors, school psychologists, parents, and the student. Vocational assessment is a process of empowerment. Too often, students have been placed into programs with little understanding on their part of the basis for the placement. Only the individual can ensure that the predictions of vocational assessment will eventually become a reality. The process must actively involve the individual in those experiences that can help in determining his or her future. The ultimate goal for each individual is successful work - that interprets to "having a valued place in society."

### *Vocational/Work Evaluation Project*

The Vocational/Work Evaluation Project at the University of South Florida has provided course work (including a basic vocational work evaluation course), inservice, technical assistance, guest presentations, and presentations at local, state, and national conferences. A statewide survey of vocational assessment services and personnel training needs was conducted. Preliminary analysis suggests that vocational assessment is occurring in most school districts and community colleges. Many districts indicated a need for continued staff training activities. Data will help with future program development.

### *Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment (CBVA) Initiative*

With the assistance of Dr. Robert Stodden, professor at the University of Hawaii, serving as consultant to the statewide initiative, orientation sessions, regional and school district meetings, interagency planning meetings, technical assistance, and training of other trainers were accomplished. CBVA activities took place throughout the state. Several school districts have developed and implemented a CBVA process. Other districts have committed and begun interagency and interdisciplinary district wide planning teams. Sixteen educators were prepared as CBVA trainers to continue this initiative in the future.

### *Summary*

There is no one way - no one method, process, or procedure for conducting vocational assessment in Florida. School districts have or are developing plans based on community resources and students' needs. It is also evident that state-supported training activities have affected services and facilitated closer partnerships among educators, business, industry, and rehabilitation. Together they are contributing to and enhancing the career preparation of all students.

For promising practices in vocational assessment and evaluation, see pages 44-47.

## Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment Addresses School-to-Work Transition

Curriculum-based vocational assessment (CBVA) is based upon the principle that individual student needs can be most efficiently defined and addressed within the context of the career/vocational curriculum sequence. This form of assessment can be broadly defined as a procedure for determining the instructional growth needs of a student based upon ongoing performance within courses and activities. Curriculum-based vocational assessment provides a means of matching student interests and strengths to instruction increasing learning outcomes and reducing limited access, low achievement and poor behavior responses.

The resulting curriculum-based vocational assessment model can be viewed as a data collection, decision-making, and program-planning process for increasing the disabled student's awareness and understanding of self in relation to work. A prime function of the model is the collection of developmental information contributing toward career/vocational programming decisions during the student's formative education years.

The model contains three levels of data collection, encompassing junior high prevocational courses and activities, high school vocational courses and cooperative work experience programs. Level I assessment activities begin in the junior high/middle school and assesses student readiness and awareness skills as demonstrated in exploratory courses and activities. Level II assessment activities begin as the student moves to high school vocational coursework. Level III assessment activities occur as students perform work-related behaviors and skills in school/community cooperative work experience programs.

Assessment information is collected within three areas of concern: work-related behaviors, generalized vocational outcomes, and specific skill outcomes. Disabled students' performance is rated by their instructors in each of these areas for each career/vocational course or activity in which they are enrolled. The assessment data received from each course instructor are then discussed and considered in making programming and placement decisions.

Unlike some CBVA models emphasizing pre-assessment data collection for instructional planning, this model is designed to assess ongoing performance during and following instruction, thus building a sequenced performance record that reflects student progress across several career/vocational courses and work experiences. The ultimate application of CBVA information is to assist high school students' transition into postsecondary vocational training opportunities or entry-level job placements. The records of student performance in career/vocational courses and work experiences are intended to assist rehabilitation counselors and employment agency personnel in further career planning for persons with disabilities.

For promising practices in CBVA, see pages 46-47.
Robert A. Stodden
University Affiliated Program
University of Hawaii

**Cooperative Consultation**

Cooperative Consultation is a structured process by which exceptional education and basic and vocational education teachers plan realistic alternatives for students encountering difficulty in the school setting. This process is characterized by mutual trust and open communication.

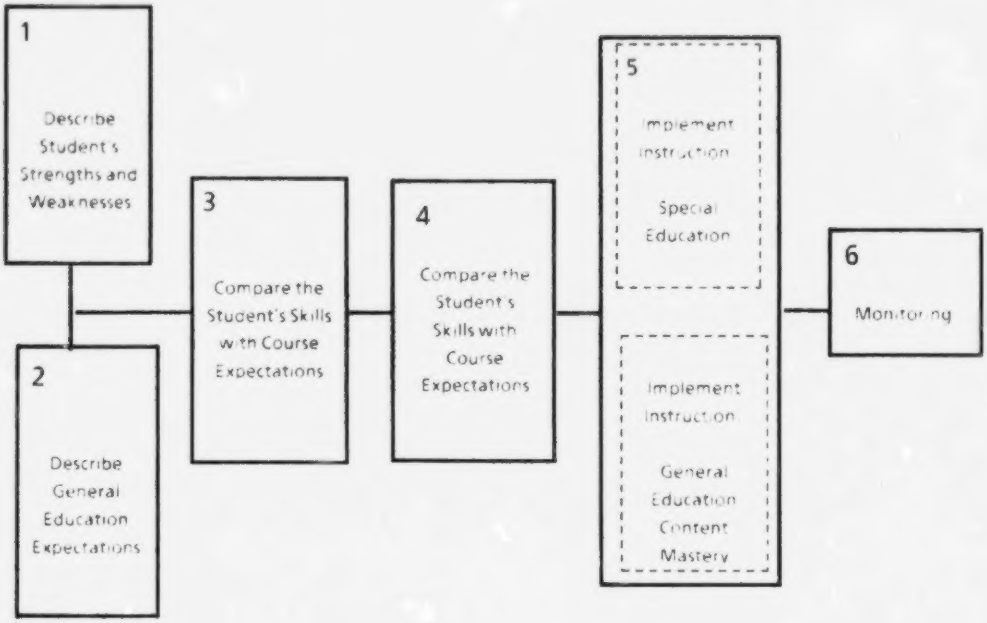
When structured effectively, Cooperative Consultation results in a pooling of observations and resources of all persons involved and a shared responsibility for implementing alternatives and monitoring the outcomes for the student.

In addition to providing indirect support for students with disabilities in mainstream situations, it has frequently been reported that Cooperative Consultation has benefited many nondisabled students. The systematic use of the Cooperative Consultation process increases clarity and productivity of teacher communication, provides support for students encountering difficulty in their basic and vocational education classes, and helps teachers involved deal effectively with similar problems in the future.

Students respond positively to the program because of the special attention they are receiving. Teachers can make modifications and try alternatives to increase the likelihood of students' success. Teachers can learn new strategies that benefit all their students, not just ESE students. Teachers gain a more positive attitude towards mainstreamed ESE students because support is provided through a collaborative problem-solving approach. The monitoring form can provide accountability and a record of student progress that can be used at parent conferences, for program review, and for course modifications. Finally, the procedure includes monitoring so Cooperative Consultation does not become just another educational program that is presented and then forgotten.

Following is a graphic display of the Cooperative Planning process with accompanying narrative.

For an example of the use of Cooperative Consultation, see page 47-49.


1
Describe Student's Strengths and Weaknesses
2
Describe General Education Expectations
3
Compare the Student's Skills with Course Expectations
4
Compare the Student's Skills with Course Expectations
5
Implement Instruction
Special Education
Implement Instruction
General Education Content Mastery
6
Monitoring

## The Cooperative Planning Process

1. Describe the student's strengths and weaknesses in terms that are easily understood and which have a direct implication for the teacher. (Student Inventory)
2. Describe the demands of the basic or vocational education setting. By interviewing the basic or vocational teacher, the classroom expectations are clearly defined. (Course Description)
3. Compare the student's skills (Student Inventory) with the classroom expectations (Course Description) to identify specific areas in which the student is likely to encounter difficulty.
4. Plan for the modifications and strategies.
5. Implement the modifications and strategies.
6. Monitor on a regular basis the success of the modifications.

## Community-Based Instruction and Curriculum

When making decisions about appropriate curriculum and delivery models of instruction which enhance successful student outcomes, one must review current literature and be willing to implement change when deemed necessary.

Professional literature acknowledges that students with developmental disabilities learn less efficiently than their nondisabled peers. This rate is substantially slower for students who are developmentally disabled. Therefore, curricula which strictly adhere to developmental milestones are not appropriate for this population.

Students with developmental disabilities have great difficulty generalizing from one instructional environment to another. Therefore, direct training of targeted skills under conditions and situations in which the skills are to be applied is most desirable.

The concept of simulated instruction in which students were trained to perform job-like tasks was a common state-of-the-art method of instruction in previous decades. While some of this simulated instruction was well organized and sequenced with daily checklists to provide adequate documentation of on-going instruction, its relevance to actual job skills in community-based entry level employment positions was lacking.

Students also were trained to perform personal, daily living skills in well-equipped, modern kitchen and home settings with little regard for the real home environments in which individual students were required to function.

Basic academic skills underlie a vast majority of skills that will be addressed in functional instructional settings. Reading, math, spoken language, and written language competencies are required to be an effective consumer, to live independently, and to work competitively.

Traditionally, these skills have been taught in isolated classroom environments. It is critical that basic skills be infused with community-based instruction (CBI) experiences. Strict reliance on a developmental instruction approach in a structured classroom environment will result in students who have obtained some basic skills but who have a limited ability to apply these skills to the programs of adult life (Schloss, Hughes, Smith, 1988).

### *Why Community-Based Instruction?*

Students with moderate and severe disabilities have special needs due to their wide range of learning abilities and performance levels. These needs are best met through direct instruction in settings where the students live, work, and play-where they will, most likely, function. The local community offers many opportunities for these students to learn skills necessary for participation in the natural environment.

Community-based instruction has been found to be the most appropriate instructional intervention for targeted individuals. Community-based instruction:

- enhances general functioning in nonschool environments (the home, the community, the work place)
- increases the number of integrated environments available
- enhances social contacts
- increases skill acquisition
- provides students with access to meaningful choices and opportunities
- gives the general public the experiences to interact constructively with students with developmental disabilities, and
- contributes to feelings of dignity and self-worth.

Ultimately, for community-based instruction to be successful, it must receive the encouragement and support of the site administrator.

*CBI: Funding and Liability*

To design and implement CBI, several issues must be addressed at each local school and/or school district. Some of these issues and suggested strategies for resolving them follow.

Funding - Fiscal support for community training is essential. Utilization of creative funding methods and development of procedures will be necessary for allocating money or operation. Suggested strategies include:

- develop procedures with the business/accounting departments within the school districts to redirect monies traditionally used for instructional supplies, equipment, petty cash, and other funds to be used instead for CBI
- develop methods for securing monies before the training occurs or for reimbursing personnel for any out of pocket expenditures for training
- recruit contributions from parent and community service organizations
- conduct fund raising activities in which the students with moderate and severe disabilities are actively involved and learning vocational skills (e.g., bake sales, car washes, selling breakfast or lunch to school personnel, and/or the student body)
- request that the student and his or her family develop a shopping list based upon items needed at home, with the family supplying the money for the purchase, and
- solicit shopping list and monies from school staff (Falvey, 1986).

Liability - The insurer of liability (that is, the party responsible for injury or property damage when students are involved in community training) is a major challenge in the development and implementation of a CBI program. Liability issues must be dealt with and policies and procedures developed locally in each school district. Although community training is not equivalent to a field trip in the traditional sense, existing school district field trip policies and procedures frequently provide adequate insurance protection for CBI activities.

The following strategies should be employed when developing CBI programs:

- contact other school districts providing community training, particularly those of similar size and extent of services to determine the level of liability coverage needed
- involve parents in every aspect of developing and implementing a community training program. Secure written parental permission for all community training experiences. Be sure parents are informed about the purpose and need for community training, and
- develop IEP goals and objectives that reflect skills necessary to function in a variety of community environments (Falvey, 1986).

### *Community-Based Instruction vs. Field Trips*

Direct instruction in natural environments should not be construed as field trips or any other kind of episodic experience (Brown, 1982). Community-based instruction requires the same amount of preparation as any other curriculum component. Each student engaging in community-based instruction requires at least the following:

- specific instructional goals and objectives for the environment
- specific teaching strategies for the environment
- specific measurement strategies for the environment
- functional and age-appropriate materials for the environment
- no more than four or five students per CBI group.

### *Record Keeping*

Documenting students' performance is an essential part of any instruction. Community-based instruction requires documentation of the student's performance in the natural environment. There are many different forms and techniques for data keeping. A form should be agreed on that gives a detailed picture of the skills or activity being measured. Whether taking data on production rate, task analysis, observation, or behavior, it is necessary to document every period spent in the community.

### *Curriculum Characteristics*

Functionality refers to an activity that is central to an individual's survival. Functional curriculum is characterized by its relevance (the direct association between the IEP objectives and the skills required by the student to independently function to the best of his or her ability in numerous environments). These environments include where the student will live, work, and play.

#### Determining if a Skill is Functional

If a student does not learn a skill, will someone else have do it for him? Example: If Susie never learns to put pegs in the pegboard, it is not necessary for someone else to do it for her. However, if Susie does not learn to grocery shop, then someone else has to do it for her. Grocery shopping is a functional skill.

Skill Performance Examples

| *Nonfunctional* | *Functional* |
|---|---|
| Primary School Age | |
| Student's gross motor training involves stepping on and off a balance beam repeatedly | Student steps up and down curbs on walks to neighborhood stores and parks. |
| Junior-High and High School Age | |
| Student sets table 10 times in classroom between 10:15 and 10:30 AM | Student sets table at lunch, eats lunch, clears tables, and washes dishes. |

A functional curriculum must also incorporate chronological age-appropriate objectives into planned instruction. It is not acceptable to offer a student educational curricula appropriate for substantially younger, nondisabled students. Instead, a student must receive instruction in areas that increase the likelihood that the student will be able to participate in the same activities and environments as his or her chronological peers (Bay District Schools, et.al., 1990).

For a description of one district's CBI program, see page 49.

Barbara Martin
Bay District Schools

## Community-Based Vocational Training

A critical component of community-based instruction in the vocational domain is employment training. Beginning early in high school years, students should have the opportunity to participate in job experience training in community businesses. This training makes the student aware of what employment is and provides opportunities to explore and develop career interests. It gives school staff an opportunity for situational assessments to identify student strengths and interests. It allows job placement personnel to locate paid employment compatible with the student's individual strengths and interests. It gives parents the opportunity to realize their child's employment capabilities.

Programs for students with moderate and severe disabilities should be considered employment awareness rather than specific skills training or readiness training. When selecting training sites (students should participate in three or four sites per school year), look for businesses offering a variety of subenvironments and related community skill situations. For situational assessments, school districts should survey employment opportunities in the community and from those results select businesses that can offer experiences in those areas.

Local offices of the U.S. Government, Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, and the Florida Division of Labor, Employment and Training, Child

Labor Section should be contacted prior to establishment of a community-based employment program to verify compliance with current labor laws. Wage and hour laws have six criteria, all of which must be met, for operating an unpaid employment training program. According to this, a nonemployment relationship exists when:

1) the training, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to that given in a vocational school

2) the training is for the benefit of the trainees or students

3) the trainees do not displace regular employees but rather work under their close observation

4) the employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the trainees, and on occasion the employer's operation may actually be impeded

5) the trainees or students are not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the training period

6) the employer and the trainees understand that the trainees or students are not entitled to wages for the time spent in training. (10b11(b) of the Wage Hour Field Operations Handbook, U.S. Dept. of Labor 1962)

Curriculum frameworks recommended for training programs are ESE Occupational Training (course #7980020) and ESE On-the-Job Training (course #7980030). As with any school program, it is important to reflect program hours, goals, and objectives of the training program, each student's individual education plan, as well as maintain accurate records of the training progress.

### References

United States Department of Labor (1962). Field operations handbook (6/21/62-10b10-10b11). Washington, DC: United States Department of Labor. Author.

Moon, M.S., Kiernan, W., & Halloran W. (1990) *School-based vocational programs and labor laws: A 1990 update*. Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 15,177 - 185.

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**Supported Competitive Employment**

Supported employment, as described by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, CFR 34 DFR, Part 363, is employment which:

- is for persons with disabilities for whom competitive employment at or above minimum wage is unlikely and who, because of their disabilities, need intensive ongoing support to perform in a work setting
- is conducted in a variety of settings, particularly work sites in which persons without disabilities are employed
- is supported by any activity needed to sustain paid work by persons with disabilities, including but not limited to supervision, training, and transportation
- is paid, for a minimum of 20 hours per week, at minimum wage or greater.

The philosophy of supported employment is based on the concepts of normalization, inclusion, and integration of persons who have disabilities with nondisabled workers in the community. It is a place-and-train model. Students do not get ready for supported employment. Supported employment emphasizes empowerment and self-determination of the individual student, to obtain quality of life outcomes and image enhancement.

Supported employment serves persons whose disabilities are so severe that they are not able to find, learn, and keep a job without intensive individual on-the-job training with a job coach and continued ongoing support and monitoring.

There are four models of supported employment. They include the enclave, mobile work crew, entrepreneurial, and individual or job coach model. The job coach model is the one being implemented by the Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students projects. It is known as the Individual Supported Employment Model.

Persons with moderate and severe levels of mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy, traumatic head injury, and chronic mental illness are working across the state as a result of the supported competitive employment job coach model.

Components of Supported Competitive Employment include:

- student intake (screening, assessment, and referral process)
- marketing and job development
- pre-job placement procedures
- one-to-one intensive on-site job coach training
- follow-along and monitoring.

Students in supported competitive employment receive one-to-one intensive on-site training by a job coach or employment specialist. Stabilization on the job is defined as the point at which on-site training and support services have been provided for 20 percent or less of the normal work hours for at least 60 calendar days. After stabilization has been attained, the job coach must provide a minimum of one hour of follow-along services to the student each week. Supported competitive employment places emphasis on assisting individuals so that they maintain their jobs.

On November 21, 1989, the State Board of Education adopted the ESE-Supported Competitive Employment Curriculum Framework (Course Number 7980150). Florida appears to be the first state in the nation which has a state-adopted curriculum framework for supported competitive employment. Students are placed into supported competitive employment with the expectation that they will be stabilized in employment and continue in the job following graduation. School districts need to arrange post-school follow-along support services with an adult agency prior to job placement in supportive competitive employment.

For an update on Florida's supported employment activities, see page 50.

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**Education for Disabled Adults Act**

The original intent of the Zollie Maynard, Sr. Education for Disabled Adults Act was to encourage disabled adults to participate in educational programs to increase their daily living skills, academic skills, economic independence, and provide financial assistance to local education agencies that provide programs for disabled adults. Adults with disabilities now have increased opportunities for postsecondary education and training. Programs and services have been implemented, including academic and vocational components, to promote individual success and independence.

Districts and community colleges that wish to implement this program are required to submit local plans to the Department of Education for review and approval. The plans include a statement of need, program description with list of classes, program entrance and exit criteria, description of the Individual Disabled Adult Education Plan, identification of the program administrator, and description of interagency agreements and coordination.

The Education for Disabled Adults Program may include courses from the following program areas: Adult General Education, Vocational Job Preparatory, Vocational Supplemental, and Vocational Preparatory. Any curriculum framework adopted by the State Board of Education, excluding Lifelong Learning, may be used in the Education for Disabled Adults Program.

Individual Disabled Adult Education Plans, developed for each student served in the program, are prepared prior to reporting for funding and reviewed at least annually. The plans include the following components: expected program outcomes; present performance level; student monitoring procedures; specialized services, aides, or equipment needed; initiation dates; periodic evaluation schedule; support services and providers; and specific job if enrolled in vocational job preparatory programs. In response to this legislation, a variety of programs have been developed throughout the state to meet the special needs of adults with disabilities in postsecondary education. This important legislation provides adults with disabilities an opportunity for ongoing career preparation.

## Community Colleges: Programs and Services for Students with Disabilities

As more students with disabilities seek to further their education, develop their skills, and compete for employment opportunities, community colleges must be prepared to recruit, educate, provide necessary services, and assist in job placement activities for these individuals. This article illustrates the effective use of existing college resources, and highlights special services available in some community colleges that students with disabilities can use to their advantage.

### *Recruitment*

Students with disabilities are often unaware of the special services and resources available at many community colleges across the state. Effective use of college recruiters can remedy this problem. As college recruiters visit high school campuses, it is useful to prepare an information flyer highlighting special services available to students with disabilities. Including this flyer in the information packet provides students with disabilities necessary information without being stigmatized.

Also, college recruiters can arrange career days when students with disabilities can tour the campus, meet instructors, talk with counselors, and gain firsthand knowledge of the special services available to them. This experience has proven extremely successful for the students from the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind who annually tour Florida Community College at Jacksonville. Students state that by actually coming onto campus they are less intimidated and more encouraged to continue their education.

### *Counseling and Advising*

Students with disabilities can take advantage of academic and personal counseling services available to all students within the Student Affairs Office at each community college. Career planning is a part of the college's role in helping all students reach their full potential. Many colleges offer aptitude and interest testing, career exploration, career workshops, and specially-focused career seminars. Because many students need to learn proper study habits and how to take tests, specialized success classes are often offered through the Student Affairs Office.

### *Scholarships*

Community colleges offer a vast array of scholarships and grants; however, students must apply for them. Students with disabilities are strongly encouraged to discuss their financial situations with financial aid representatives prior to enrollment to allow time to obtain necessary documentation and meet eligibility requirements.

### *Faculty Training*

Classroom and curriculum modifications are often required to accommodate students with disabilities. Representatives from Disabled Student Services can provide training to educate faculty members about accepted modifications allowed by law. Training allows faculty to keep abreast of the latest adaptive equipment available to students. Many instructors need to learn how to work with hearing impairments, students with interpreters as well as successful instructional strategies for learning disabilities. Some community colleges offer this training to both full- time and part-time Instructors at the beginning of each Fall term. Also, seminars addressing the needs of a specific disabled population can be conducted, depending on the needs of the faculty members.

*Special Services*

Vocational Evaluation: Many students with disabilities (like other students) are unsure as to which program of study or vocational program will best meet their needs. Florida Community College at Jacksonville, Miami- Dade Community College, Indian River Community College, and Santa Fe Community College have outstanding vocational evaluation programs on campus to assist students with disabilities. Students are assessed to determine their vocational aptitudes, academic level, manual dexterity, career interests, and study skill level. Individual counseling, by certified vocational evaluators, ensures optimal success in placing a student with a disability into the appropriate program.

Auxiliary Learning Aids Program: All twenty-eight of Florida's community colleges can receive money through the Auxiliary Learning Aids Program. This money can be utilized to provide tutors, readers, notetakers, interpreters, and to purchase specialized equipment (VISUAL TEKS, braille printers, large-screen computers, talking calculators, tape recorders, automatic door openers). There is no cost to the student for these services.

Some community colleges have Disabled Student Specialists who, with prior student approval, talk with their assigned instructors about the special needs of the student. Faculty can then request specific information regarding successful classroom and instructional modification techniques. This communication process alerts the instructor as to the special needs of the student and often removes unnecessary barriers for the student.

Job Placement Activities: As students with disabilities near the completion of their program, many community colleges provide specialized classes to prepare the student for upcoming job-seeking activities. Classes focus on explaining disabilities positively, correct application completion, and proper interviewing techniques. Students with disabilities learn to place the emphasis on their abilities rather than their disabilities. Videotaping practice interviews has been extremely successful with the disabled population.

In addition to Job Placement Specialists employed by the college to assist all graduates, some community colleges offer job placement services designed especially for students with disabilities. These Placement Specialists have a working knowledge of disabilities and have established linkages with employers who want to employ students with disabilities. Additional follow-along services ensure the student and employer a successful placement. The Placement Specialist can also assist with any work site modification and, if necessary, can refer the employer to JAN (Job Accommodation Network, 1-800-526-7234) for specialized assistance.

In addition to vocational evaluations, Auxiliary Learning Aids, and job placement activities, some community colleges provide highly specialized programs for a specific population of individuals with disabilities. Florida Community College at Jacksonville offers independent living for adult blind (ILAB) individuals, where students are transported to campus and taught daily living skills, communication techniques, and provided coping counseling.

Miami-Dade Community College offers a specialized program for students with learning disabilities where students can gain a better understanding of their specific learning disability and learn adaptive learning styles.

In summary, students with disabilities are taking advantage of the services available in community colleges across Florida. At Florida Community College at Jacksonville, 397 students with disabilities received services in 1985; in 1992, over 750 students with disabilities received extensive services. This growth is expected to continue into the next decade with the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This article provided suggestions for better utilization of existing college personnel and resources as well as proposed services which are needed to meet the demands of this growing population.

For some promising practices in serving persons with disabilities in postsecondary programs, see pages 52-53.

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## PROMISING PRACTICES IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

- Mainstreamed Students at Vocational Technical Centers
- Mainstream Vocational Activities for ESE Students
- Project VICTORY (A Career/Vocational Program for Exceptional Students)
- The Career Connection
- OJT Program in Osceola County School District
- OJT Program in Brevard County School District
- Programs in Seminole County School District
- Specialized Vocational Programs in Polk County School District
- Programs in Santa Rosa County School District
- Vocational Assessment for the ESE Student
- Work Evaluation in Collier County School District
- Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment (CBVA) in Pasco County School District
- Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment in Broward County School District
- Modified Mainstream Programs and Cooperative Consultation
- A Teacher's Perspective of CBI
- Update on Florida Supported Competitive Employment Activities
- Special Programs for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities at George Stone Area Vocational Technical Center
- Postsecondary Special Needs Co-op Program

## Mainstreamed Students at Vocational Technical Centers

Mainstreamed Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students' opportunities for successful vocational job preparatory completion and entry into a satisfying career may be greatly enhanced if given the opportunity to enter, remain in, and complete an occupational training program at a vocational technical center. Students who have the interest, and are provided with appropriate support services, can successfully train alongside adult students, in an adult atmosphere and exit programs prepared to become competitively employed.

Entering a vocational training program is only one small step in the total process of occupational training for the mainstreamed student. Exiting with job skills necessary for entry-level employment requires the collaborative and cooperative efforts of several individuals.

Broward County has implemented a systematic approach of support services to meet the needs of mainstreamed ESE students. The process involves outreach and recruitment, referral and intake, assessment and support services including Cooperative Consultation, adaptations, modifications, paraprofessional assistance, peer tutoring, and job placement assistance.

### *Creating an Awareness of Vocational Education, Job Training, and Employment Opportunities*

Recruitment efforts and awareness processes start at the middle-school level. A vocational interest assessment instrument is administered to all eighth grade exceptional students in order to provide them with a visual, nonreading profile of a variety of occupations. Counseling and follow-up sessions, by the Vocational Resource Specialist, are provided to students and their parents to help them select an appropriate career choice. The results of the interest inventory may be part of the student's I.E.P.

Career days and tours of vocational technical programs are commonly used to provide students with an awareness of vocational options. Vocational technical center ESE specialists also visit high schools and provide vocational information to students, ESE teachers and parents.

### *Intake and Assessment Procedures*

An ESE student's initial exposure to a vocational technical center is greatly impacted by the instructional and noninstructional personnel with whom he/she comes in contact. Hence, the ESE Specialist at the vocational technical center plays an important role in providing a nonthreatening atmosphere to begin the step-by-step procedures in successful program entry and completion.

ESE students receive an individualized, continuous, vocational assessment. Vocational assessment involves the cooperative efforts of ESE specialists, vocational instructors, guidance counselors, parents, students, and other appropriate individuals or agencies. Focusing on the ESE students' unique characteristics and qualifications helps ensure appropriate vocational program placement, as well as successful completion of the program.

The ESE Specialist:

- reviews cumulative records, including a collection of background information, psychometric tests, and standardized academic and achievement scores

- analyzes behavioral observations and

- conducts a personal interview with the student and his/her parents

Academic achievement, reading, math, and language scores are not the only indicators of the student's potential for success. Other ancillary factors, including the student's motivation, maturity level, self-esteem, family support, interpersonal relationships, and learning style are also considered. Other assessments, including computerized interest and aptitude programs, work samples, classroom tours, and shadowing assist students in the decision-making process. Actually meeting vocational instructors has influenced many ESE students in choosing a vocational program. In many observable cases, a bonding and connection between the vocational teacher and the ESE students occurred. In such instances students tend to remain in and complete the vocational program.

*Strategies and Support Services During Training*

Once students have chosen a vocational career path, an individualized program of study is developed. Specialized components are identified to meet the student's needs and to assist vocational instructors in their teaching methodology. The following strategies are incorporated into the student's vocational training plan:

- Cooperative Consultation
- instructional paraprofessional assistance on a one-to-one or small group basis
- tutorial assistance
- modifications to curriculum, course length, equipment, and instructional delivery systems
- individualized counseling
- peer tutoring
- Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment
- parental involvement
- learning styles assessment
- integration of vocational and academic competencies

The support process is continuous and designed to facilitate change. Mainstreamed students may require many changes in services and programs as the training process evolves. Guidance counselors and vocational resource personnel respond frequently to needs of ESE students. Once the vocational training process is complete, the final goal of getting a job is realized.

*Job Placement Services*

A job placement specialist assists ESE vocational technical center completers to locate employment. All efforts are made to place students on a job in the area in which they have been trained. The job placement procedure utilizes an interdisciplinary approach. A team, including vocational instructors, guidance counselors, vocational rehabilitation counselors, ESE specialists, the student, parents, and a transitional specialist, meets to discuss job placement procedures and to facilitate the transition from school to work. The job placement specialist uses this information to individualize strategies and match potential workers with jobs best suited to their identified strengths.

Students are offered ongoing counseling and support services throughout the job search process. Interview practice, employability skills, and appropriate work habits are emphasized throughout the training program and reviewed during the job placement process.

Employers in business and industry serve on the Vocational Handicapped Advisory Committee and act as advisors concerning the content of vocational programs, as well as assisting in the identification of Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment competencies. The advisory committee also seeks to share information with other businesses in eliminating bias in hiring persons with disabilities. Presently a video entitled *Employers Speaking to Employers* is being developed by the committee to address this issue.

Vocational technical centers offer mainstreamed exceptional students an excellent opportunity to acquire state-of-the-art training. Technological advances and changing needs of business and industry require a highly skilled, reliable workforce. Exceptional students are able to succeed when support services are provided. Coordinated efforts and a commitment to students can make a difference in their lives.

Annette Zylinski
Vocational and Technology Education
Broward County School District

### Mainstream Vocational Activities for ESE Students in Seminole County

(1) The School Board of Seminole County maintains a firm commitment to meeting the needs of all exceptional students and in providing a free, appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. (2) Seminole is the Coordinating Project for the Expansion of Supported Competitive Employment for the State of Florida. (3) vocational programs are designed so that every person who graduates has the opportunity to leave with marketable skills and the knowledge necessary to succeed in an occupation. (4) The School Board of Seminole County has set a goal to have exceptional students employed before they leave high school.

All exceptional students, except severely emotionally disturbed, are on regular campuses, making it easier to mainstream. *Futures Planning Guide* is completed for youth with disabilities outlining how the student, parent, school, and agencies plan to work together beginning at age 14 through five years after graduation to ensure career success.

Selected exceptional students, Grade 11, are trained at business sites (four different businesses) with Job Coaches assisting. Job Coaches are paid for by Health and Rehabilitative Services - Developmental Services; Department of Labor - VR; Private Industry Council; and Carl Perkins Act dollars.

Exceptional students at one of our high schools (Lyman) can receive teacher assistant support while mainstreamed into a vocational class.

A Resource Manual for Vocational Education/ESE Teachers: *Suggested Course Modifications and Instructional Strategies/Techniques for ESE Students* has been written.

### Working with Business/ESE Students

Exceptional students, along with their Job Coach, are trained at the following businesses in our community:

- Florida Hospital
- Wal-Mart (two locations)
- Publix (three locations)
- Denny's Restaurants
- Florida Polymer (Manufacturing)
- Piccadilly Cafeteria
- Morrison's Cafeteria
- Sheraton Inn
- Tuscawilla Country Club

The Seminole Interagency Exceptional Employment Council has included business representatives. The IBM Corporation has sponsored a Recognition Banquet for ESE students completing the Job Experience Program.

## Project Victory: A Career/Vocational Program for Exceptional Students in Dade County

**Victory** stands for learning about how to behave on a job -- how to speak to fellow workers, how to dress.

**Victory** means having the self-confidence to look employers in the eye and say "Good Morning" with a smile.

**Victory** provides hands-on experience with a variety of career clusters in middle school, within a simulated work environment.

**Victory** supports on-the-job training with a teacher on-site at all times, to offer assistance in learning new skills and behaviors.

Project Victory is a School Board-approved program sponsored by Exceptional Student Education and Career Education. The program is designed to expose middle school exceptional students to the behaviors needed in the world of work, to increase students' self-esteem, and to expose exceptional students to a variety of career clusters through learning activity stations. At the senior high school level, Project Victory provides a supported work environment at retail sites for three hours a day.

Eighth and ninth grade students enrolled in the middle school component attend an Employability Skills class for one hour a day. Every other day of the week they spend this hour in a simulated world of work laboratory. The laboratory is modeled after the elementary career lab and has 23 stations. Employability skills taught in the classroom are reinforced in the laboratory environment with hands on activities.

## Volusia County's Four Step Continuum The Career Connection

The Career Connection is a systematic approach to individual career preparation for students with special needs. Students with special needs include students in ESE programs, students in LEP/ESOL programs, students meeting dropout prevention criteria, and students who are academically or economically disadvantaged.

The program blends several special population "exemplary initiatives" in a four- step continuum of programs and services to assist students in the career development process. A few of the exemplary initiatives that are incorporated in this program include Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment (CBVA), Cooperative Consultation, Functional Curriculum, Applied Academics, Individual Career Assessment, Florida's Blueprint for Career Development, and Supported Competitive Employment. The Career Connection program also incorporates effective schools principles, accountability and the school improvement process into its articulated continuum.

This innovative program promotes high teacher expectations for student achievement and includes frequent monitoring of student progress. The program also enhances school-based management approaches for student outcomes as indicated in Florida's Accountability Law. The Career Connection's systematic approach provides appropriate assistance so that all students learn the specified curriculum, regardless of factors in their background which have ordinarily been identified as those which prevent such learning. This exciting initiative was made possible through the continued joint planning and collaboration between Volusia County School District's Department of Vocational/Community Education and the Department of Exceptional Student Education/Student Services.

The Career Connection's four-step process, denoting a continuum of programs and services, includes:

1. Self Knowledge and Career Exploration
2. Educational/Vocational Skill Development
3. Educational/Vocational Specialized Training
4. Employment

These four steps are applicable to any individual who strives to achieve long-term career success (the model can be viewed as appropriate for grades 6-12 or ages 16-21, depending on the population being served).

1. Self Knowledge and Career Exploration

   It is important that an individual finds out about oneself, assesses specific strengths and abilities, and areas of interest. It is then equally important for a student to explore all areas of available careers so that the student has a broad base of knowledge that will assist in matching appropriate career areas with the students' interests, abilities, personality, and special needs. Various areas can be accessed to assist in accomplishing this including occupational specialists/guidance counselors, assessment within the curriculum , Florida Job Services, or vocational evaluation services with appropriate referral through the Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

2. Educational/Vocational Skill Development

   Once this broad base of knowledge is achieved, career areas can be targeted so that appropriate academic courses, vocational courses, functional curriculum, applied curriculum, employability skills, and community-based instruction can be scheduled or developed for the student. Ongoing assessment, through the curriculum or otherwise, and annual planning, must occur during the entire process to ensure appropriateness.

3. Educational/Vocational Specialized Training

   Specific training for a career can occur through vocational job preparatory programs, dual enrollment with Daytona Beach Community College, or community-based training (non-paid). Additional training can occur within the initial phases of employment programs.

4. Employment

   Employment programs consist of actual paid jobs within the community. They are coordinated by vocational teachers, ESE teachers, or the Employment Facilitator. Ongoing assessment and planning must occur to ensure an appropriate and effective job match between the student's skills and the skills needed to succeed on the job.

Employment programs include:

Diversified Cooperative Training (D.C.T.)-10th-12th grades through vocational D.C.T. teacher

Cooperative On the Job Training (O.J.T.)-10th-12th grades through one of six specific area vocational teachers:
1. Agribusiness Cooperative Education
2. Business Cooperative Education
3. Diversified Cooperative Education
4. Health Occupations Cooperative Education
5. Home Economics Cooperative Education
6. Marketing Cooperative Education

Work Experience - 7th-10th grades (dropout prevention programs only)

ESE On-the-Job Training (ESE-O.J.T.)-9th-12th grades through ESE teachers--typically targeted for mild population--infrequent support (EH, LD, EMH resource)

Supported Competitive Employment (ESE-S.C.E.)-age 18-21 years
- through Employment Facilitator with additional support from job coaches
- typically targeted for moderate and severe population--time-limited support
- transition to adult service provider for long-term follow-along

- S.C.E. services are provided on a referral basis

The Career Connection is designed as a technical assistance model for schools, with additional services available including:

1. Staff
   - ESE teachers providing Cooperative Consultation services for students in vocational programs
   - Vocational teacher assistants providing direct services to special needs students in carrying out suggested modifications in vocational programs
   - Employment Facilitator conducting job development for students with moderate and severe disabilities and linking them with adult service providers prior to employment
   - Job coaches that provide intensive training and follow-along services to students with moderate and severe disabilities

2. Materials
   - A library of career preparation materials available on loan to all teachers, occupational specialists, and guidance personnel - these materials are organized by student competencies as stated in the *Blueprint*
   - Additional materials available for purchase for targeted schools

3. Networking/Inservice Activities
   - Career Connection school-based steering committee members include: Vocational Education Teacher
     ESE Teacher
     ESOL/LEP Teacher
     Drop Out Prevention Teacher
     Occupational Specialist
     Guidance Counselor

   - Career Connection District Technical Assistance Team:
     Vocational Specialist/Special Populations
     ESE Teacher Specialist-Secondary Programs
     ESE Teacher Specialist-Cooperative Consultation
     ESE Teacher Specialist-S/P Population
     Coordinator of Guidance
     Drop Out Prevention Specialist
     Foreign Language/ESOL Specialist
     Project S.P.I.C.E. Facilitator

   - Community Advisory Council "Volusia Flagler Community Transition Team"

   - Multiple day teacher inservice activities

   - School-based curriculum writing, revisions, enhancement opportunities

   - Information bulletin "Building Partnerships"

   - Technical assistance to schools from district team

This program would not be a success if it were not for the continued support and participation of everyone. When we all work together, we can make a difference for students with special needs, so that they too can achieve the dignified lifestyle that we all strive for!

Lisa Guess
Vocational Education Department

### OJT Program in Osceola County School District

On-the-job (OJT) training experiences lay the foundation for a successful transition from school to work for many ESE students. In Osceola County, the Vocational Education Department has established partnerships with many local businesses to provide a variety of job site training opportunities for students earning vocational credits toward a Special Diploma. Currently, training is offered for entry-level positions in lodging, health care, clerical, retail sales, food service and horticulture.

Students enroll in "SCORE" (Successful Careers Obtained from Real-Life Experiences) in tenth grade. They are transported from school to a job site for two periods daily, where they are met by a teacher certified in ESE or Vocational Education. The teacher develops a training plan for each student which identifies the job-specific tasks and work-related behaviors to be mastered. Students train in at least two different areas at each job site, while they are paired with exemplary employees to model. Students transfer to a different job site each semester and may remain in the program for six semesters.

The SCORE students gain experience in many occupations and learn to adjust to new work environments. Although they are not paid, they are treated as actual employees in many ways. The students wear company uniforms and nametags, learn to use time clocks, attend employee orientation, and are evaluated by department supervisors.

Although classroom teachers notice an immediate improvement in students' attitudes and sense of responsibility, the true success of on-the-job training is evidenced by the 95% employment rate of graduates and twelfth graders who have completed this program.

Joy Suldo
Vocational, Adult, and Community Education

### OJT Program in Brevard County School District

On-the-job (OJT) training programs are vocational education programs that combine classroom studies with occupational experiences in the community. Students participate during part of their school day to receive skill training on the job. On-the-job programs also provide for experiences which help teach the affective skills of employment such as the value of work and the effect of absenteeism. This approach to career preparation is intended to train students for a specific job and focuses on the role of the individual student as a worker.

Many students with disabilities benefit from on-the-job training programs with the provision of support services or modifications of program prerequisites. Vocational skills training for many students with disabilities is optimally achieved at work sites, rather than in classrooms. For some of these students, the regular academic classroom is the most restrictive environment. As an alternative, a combination of academic/cognitive instruction with a vocational/kinesthetic practicum has proven effective.

This combination of study and work has been shown to be an excellent approach in helping students with disabilities transition from education to employment. On-the-job training programs provide students with disabilities an opportunity to gain the best educational benefits of both the academic system and the community in which they live. OJT programs offer both a challenge and an opportunity for students with disabilities to access and participate in the world of work.

Betsy Laflin
Vocational Education Department

**Programs in Seminole County School District**

The School Board of Seminole County, Exceptional Student Education Department has three Supported Work Programs. These are designed to meet the individualized needs of a wide variety of students so that a smooth transition from school to work can occur for each of them. Interagency coordination is an essential part of the Supported Work Program. Programs are funded by one or more of these agencies: Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students; The School Board of Seminole County, Exceptional Student Education and Vocational Education; Health and Rehabilitative Services, Developmental Services; Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation; and Seminole County Private Industry Council.

*Job Experience Training (JET)*

The Job Experience Training Program (JET) is designed for students with mild and moderate disabilities in the 11th grade (age 16 or older). Each student in the program participates in four different nonpaid training experiences on actual job sites. Students attend school for three periods of the day and are on the job three periods of the day with the supervision of a JET coach. This program will prepare ESE students for obtaining employment in their senior year.

*On-The-Job Training (OJT)*

On-the-Job Training is a course designed to meet exceptional students' elective requirements for graduation by obtaining and maintaining competitive employment. Students may participate part-time or full-time depending upon individual credit needs. Students earn one credit for each 135 hours of employment. Credit may also be earned during the OJT Summer School Program. The work experience teacher assists students in locating and maintaining employment. The work experience teacher monitors student progress on the job to ensure success.

*Transitional Employment Services (TES)*

Transitional Employment Services is a supported work program for E.S.E. students with moderate and severe disabilities or multiple disabilities. This is a place-then-train model, in which the job developer/trainer works one-to-one with the student at the job site, assisting with all phases of employment, including job skills, transportation, training, banking and money skills, grooming, follow-along support after job stabilization is attained, and transitioning to an adult agency for continued support after graduation. Students earn one credit for each 135 hours of employment.

Seminole County's Supported Work Programs provide a continuum for all exceptional students to reach their potential in the world of work. The district offers an exemplary vocational alternative to traditional classroom training, helping exceptional students make a smoother transition from school to work and community settings.

Mary Branyon
Sue Busbin

### Specialized Vocational Programs in Polk County School District

Roosevelt Vocational Junior/Senior High School has an enrollment of over three hundred special needs students working toward receiving special diplomas. These students are educable mentally handicapped, emotionally disturbed, hearing impaired, or have specific learning disabilities. They range from 12 to 21 years of age and are in the seventh through twelfth grades. In order to meet their wide-ranging needs, our program uses an innovative combination of academic and vocational preparation that helps students become marketable through life management, employability skills and building a positive self concept. Our goal for each student is to make them taxpayers.

An integral part of our program is our school-wide Behavior Management System which establishes rules necessary for both school and work. Again, our emphasis is on employability skills, which includes being drug free. As students realized they had to be drug free in order to get and keep the jobs they were training for, Roosevelt's after-graduation employment rate went from 10 percent in 1984 to 80% in 1990.

In 1989, President George Bush recognized Roosevelt's accomplishments through the National Drug Free School's Recognition Program. Roosevelt was one of 47 schools recognized for their exemplary program. The President's Rose Garden Presentation of the award highlighted one of our proudest accomplishments.

*Saying Yes to Employability*

Handling potential and existing problems with drug use has helped other programs at Roosevelt succeed as well. Our Employability Skills Program (ESP) offers students hands-on work experience through local businesses in their last two years of school. Students work at job sites, including a car dealership, a hospital, a building construction site, a supermarket, and a large resort and conference center. The resort and conference center also provide classroom space where students take their academic classes. During this two-year period, they can experience entry-level jobs in food services, housekeeping, grounds maintenance, custodial services, bagging and produce preparation, small building construction, car washing and detailing, and conference set-up.

Job coaches with small groups of five to eight students monitor their progress on grade sheets. The coaches require that students develop positive work habits, including good attitudes toward work and other workers, knowledge of the job, performance speed, and proper safety habits. The interaction between students and coaches--as well as job experience itself--helps students deal positively with employers and the public, and encourages the development of job skills.

Roosevelt's Job Placement Program also helps our students become valuable assets to the community. Our overall success at Roosevelt is not measured by strong programs or by winning an important national award. We can best measure success by the accomplishments of our students. They are our future, and we share with them the commitment to living drug-free, and to giving.

Harold Maready
Roosevelt Vocational School
Polk County School District

**Programs in Santa Rosa County School District**

The Occupational Training Program at Locklin Vocational Technical Center is designed to give exceptional education students of Santa Rosa County vocational skills and on-the-job training.

*Program Brief*

Students attend Occupational Training Program for part of their high school day. Program options include vocational training, community-based job experiences (non-paid), and community-based employment.

*Vocational Training*

Students may participate in one of the twelve vocational programs at Locklin Vo-Tech. An exceptional education instructor and assistant are available to assist the student and vocational instructor with specific needs. Adaptations may be made to accommodate the teacher or student. These may include revising tests, orally presenting test or bookwork, interpreting classroom material, and giving assistance with procedures. Objectives are chosen to meet the needs of the individual student and situation.

*Community-Based Job Experiences (non-paid)*

Students rotate through a series of established jobs in the local community where they are treated as employees. Initially a job coach works closely with the student to help ensure success. This assistance is faded and follow-along services continue throughout the training. Students have the opportunity to experience the "working world" while still receiving school support. They learn important employability skills such as being on time, staying on task, calling in when ill, showing respect to employers and co-workers in addition to learning actual job skills. Group meetings are held regularly for students to share experiences and learn from each other. Businesses are eager to work with the program.

*Community-Based Employment (paid)*

Students attend school part of the day, are employed in a paid position, and earn school credits. Students are responsible for transportation and recording work hours. Evaluations are completed by the employer. Monitoring of the student and business continues throughout the year. When necessary, interventions are made by the teacher to keep the student on a successful path.

Donna Christopher
Locklin Vocational-Technical Center

**Vocational Assessment for the ESE Student**

The purpose of vocational assessment for the disabled student is to discover strengths and interests that can be used by the counselor to implement a course of study in which the student has the opportunity to be successful. By using a comprehensive approach of measuring aptitudes, interests, physical tolerance, work habits, and general educational achievement levels, the assessment process can be utilized to set short-term or long-term goals. Many assessment instruments exist and it is important for the evaluator to be familiar with and have several available because of the variance in disabilities encountered.

Several instruments have been developed by the Vocational Research Institute, a division of the Jewish Employment and Vocational Service of Philadelphia (JEVS). APTICOM is a multiple aptitude test battery, interest inventory, and educational skills test (reading level maximum fourth grade) targeting, among others, special education students. The computer-generated report also lists vocational recommendations using the Worker Trait Groups of the Guide for Occupational Exploration based on the student's scores. The Aptitude Test Battery of the APTICOM includes object identification, abstract shape matching, clerical matching, eye-hand-foot coordination, pattern visualization, computation, finger dexterity, manual dexterity, numerical reasoning, word meanings, and eye-hand coordination. VIEWS, a system which assesses the work potential of students with various levels of mental retardation, provides hands-on activities in a simulated work environment. A training phase is included in this assessment to ensure the student understands the work sample prior to the scored phase. VIEWS requires no reading ability. Vocational Interest, Temperament and Aptitude System (VITAS) contains 22 work samples representing the Worker Trait Groups. Minimal reading ability is required.

The System for Assessment of Group Evaluation (SAGE) assesses cognitive and conceptual abilities, vocational interest, temperament, work attitude, and vocational aptitudes. Norms can be selected from four groups including junior/senior high school students and vocational-technical school participants. A companion to SAGE, COMPUTE-A-MATCH, matches the student's test scores to job profiles from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles

Various assessment tools, such as the Talent Assessment Program (TAP), Self-Directed Search (Holland), C.I.T.E. Learning Styles Instrument (Babien, Burdine, Albright, and Randol) can be combined to develop an occupational profile to the educational benefit of the ESE student.

With the assessment results in hand, the evaluator, counselor, student, and parents can choose a program that can result in a happy productive adult.

Elaine Jacobsen
Tampa Bay Vocational-Technical High School
Hillsborough County School District

**Work Evaluation in Collier County**

Abstract. Work Evaluation can be a most fulfilling and exciting educational experience. Everyone has important decisions to make, and it is reasonable that better decisions are made when plenty of good information is available. Work Evaluation provides personal information so that good decisions--especially vocational decisions--can be made. For individuals with disabilities such a service is vital because of actual limitations and invalid assumptions. The actual limitations are those that truly exist. The invalid assumptions are those that are too often made about individuals with disabilities; they are arrived at unscientifically without valid data.

*Work Evaluation.* In Collier County one of the best equipped labs in the state of Florida has been providing assessment services for individuals with disabilities since 1976 when federal funds were granted the county by the Department of Education.

*Clientele.* The range in age is from 13 to 85, representing all disabling conditions. Obviously, Work Evaluation serves the entire community, not just the public schools.

*Materials.* APTICOM, VALPAR, JEVS, TAP, SINGER, TOWER, and hundreds of interest, personality, and aptitude tests, the accumulation of almost 15 years. These are all listed in an annotated catalog.

*Personnel.* A certified Vocational Evaluator and a part-time volunteer aide.

*Program Length.* From one hour to several weeks, even months, depending upon the need for comprehensive, in-depth information. The average is about 30 hours.

*Philosophy.* Clients are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves, to be independent, to make their own decisions--including the content of the assessment program.

*Follow-Up.* There is regular tracking of the clientele with results printed in periodic progress reports.

*Work Adjustment.* The Work Adjustment Program was conceived as an adjunct to Work Evaluation to fulfill the training and placement needs of clients whose needs could not be met through already existing programs. A placement specialist was added, and the county had a complete service for the potentially competitively employable individual with disabilities: Work Evaluation, Work Adjustment, and Placement/Follow Through, all primarily supported by FTE with some DOE grants for aides. These three programs represented a fulfillment of Dewey's concept of Pragmatism as applied to vocational education for individuals with disabilities. Subsequent reorganization has replaced this system.

*Summary.* Work Evaluation in Collier County is an example of a school system's vocational assessment program that serves not just the school population but also the community at large. Work Evaluation is a comprehensive, systematic process that benefits its clients by promoting self-reliance, independence, self-confidence, and intelligent decision making.

William R. Lindsay
James Lorenzo Walker Vocational-Technical Center
Collier County School District.

### Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment (CBVA) in Pasco County

In Pasco County, the Evaluation Subcommittee of the ESE/Vocational Steering Committee was organized to develop and implement assessments for ESE students. The subcommittee members consisted of teachers, both ESE and vocational, job placement specialists, school psychologists, a work evaluation specialist, and administrators. Several subcommittee members received training in CBVA and the process was given strong consideration for use in the Pasco County School District.

A Performance Profile was developed by a group of vocational teachers from the vocational center and various middle schools. The Performance Profile focuses on work-related behaviors and was designed for all seventh graders who enroll in the year-long vocational wheel. It was piloted at two middle schools in 1989-90.

For 1990-91, the Performance Profile was revised by the subcommittee members, who formed teams to provide inservice training to all middle and high schools in the process. Presently, all seventh graders enrolled in the vocational wheel are being assessed.

In July, 1991, a group of middle-school vocational teachers developed CBVA forms for their eighth grade exploratory courses. In 1991-92, the forms were used by all eighth grade exploratory teachers who evaluated only ESE students mainstreamed in their programs.

Ninth and tenth grade ESE students have the opportunity to enroll in a CBVA Wheel of Interest at Marchman Vocational Center. This secondary vocational school serves five high schools and students are enrolled for half a day. These ESE students serve as teacher's assistants or observers in up to fourteen different vocational programs. Students rotate through the programs and the length of time depends on their interest and success in each program. A paraprofessional job coach supervises the students and evaluates them using CBVA forms developed by the vocational instructors. This information provides the basis for student placement in a vocational program the following year.

For the future, high school ESE teachers who are now required to develop individual transition plans (ITPs) for their students are anxiously awaiting the CBVA information to use in transition planning.

Gail Barnes
Vocational Education
Pasco County School District

### Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment in Broward County

Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment (CBVA) is proving to be a success in Broward County's four pilot sites. Students enrolled in vocational programs are being assessed on the actual vocational competencies they are mastering in their occupational training programs. CBVA is also proving to be an integral component of the Cooperative Consultation Model. Recently a team of ESE and vocational instructors participated in a training session integrating CBVA into the Cooperative Consultation concept and computerizing the assessment results to eliminate paperwork.

CBVA is implemented when an exceptional student enrolls in a vocational program. By using checklists of competencies taken from curriculum frameworks, instructors are able to provide a realistic evaluation of the students' abilities to perform tasks required in related occupations. The assessment process focuses on the positive aspects of what a student can accomplish.

CBVA guidelines have been established and trainers have been prepared to share the process throughout the state. The results of the process have been reviewed by the Council for Vocational Education for Individuals with Disabilities and have become a valuable reference when used in job placement services for the disabled. The coordinated efforts of Vocational and Technology Education and ESE Transitional Services enhance successful student completion and placement. Efforts include material modification, teacher assistance, and expanded community services resources.

David Dunn
Mike Perduto
Broward County School District

### Modified Mainstream Programs And Cooperative Consultation

The purpose of Cooperative Consultation is to increase coordination and cooperation between exceptional, and general/vocational education teachers. As a result of these teachers' collaborative efforts, curriculum may be adapted to meet the unique educational needs of exceptional students. When instructional alternatives are planned and provided for exceptional students, it is often found that many other students in the class benefit from the modifications.

General/vocational education teachers report one of the major problems regarding mainstreaming is a lack of communication among all staff working with exceptional students. While it is recognized that most general education teachers who have mainstreamed exceptional students and most exceptional education teachers who serve these students in special settings do in fact exchange information about the students' special needs, this model, called Cooperative Consultation, provides a structured and systematic process of communication, which is efficient and comprehensive. The streamlined process will enable educators to communicate more effectively and identify problems and solutions more readily in a time-efficient manner.

The Improvement of Secondary Curriculum for Exceptional Students coordinated statewide activities that included a task force (1984-1986) and piloting of the model in selected secondary schools (1986-1988). Expansion and turnaround training was conducted from 1988-1991, sponsored by the Curriculum Improvement Project. Dr. Hunt Riegel, developer of the Cooperative Consultation model, served as a consultant to the Project and assisted with selected training activities. A number of teams were trained throughout the state to provide turnaround training.

Recognizing the many benefits of Cooperative Consultation, Pasco County became involved early, piloting the model at Land O'Lakes High School and Pine View Middle School in 1986-1988. Initially, a small school team is trained and the process expands slowly, taking two to three years to become completely institutionalized to include all teachers and students. In 1990-1991, Mainstream Consult teachers were placed at Land O'Lakes High School, Pine View Middle School, and Marchman Vocational Center. These schools were selected based upon the extent of their involvement with the model and a commitment to the process from the administration.

At the same time that Cooperative Consultation was expanding in Pasco, an ESE/Vocational Steering Committee was organized and co-chaired by the Supervisor of Vocational Education and the Supervisor of Exceptional Student Education. The committee is comprised of teachers, both ESE and Vocational, school psychologists, agency representatives, and administrators. The purpose of the committee was to develop goals and make recommendations to improve and enhance transition programs for ESE students. Three subcommittees or work groups were formed: Evaluation, to develop assessments for students; Curriculum, to develop and implement vocational courses and OJT programs appropriate for ESE students; and, Communication, to improve and enhance communication among ESE teachers, vocational teachers, administrators, parents, and students.

Through the working relationship that developed from committee work and Cooperative Consultation, communication, respect, and cooperation have flourished among teachers in the secondary schools. The worst-case scenario for vocational teachers was to have ESE students in their class who were not even identified. As a result of these initiatives, ESE teachers and administrators report an increased positive attitude toward mainstreamed ESE students.

Vocational teachers have benefited from using instructional techniques that can be generalized to regular students with learning problems. These innovative instructional techniques include pictorial tool identification with verbal response, and the use of peer tutors who work in teams with ESE students to complete academic assignments. ESE teachers have benefited from these initiatives by becoming more familiar with the content and skills required for vocational programs and as a result, making more appropriate placements in vocational and OJT classes.

Students are more successful in vocational classes due to the enhanced communication among teachers and monitoring. Progress reports are completed every three to four weeks on ESE students in vocational programs and shared with the ESE teacher. If a problem is noted, it can be addressed before it is too late and the student has failed.

Mainstream Consult teachers were hired at three schools this year. "I have been able to keep paperwork to a minimum for teachers so that they can devote more time to instruction and modifications," said Donna Garguilo. Donna also described some of the contracts that were established for students who had problems with attendance or completing assignments. When the teacher reports that the student is "slipping," Donna will call him in to discuss the problem and then the teacher does not have to be the "bad guy."

This year Exit Points have also been developed for selected vocational programs. Many ESE students cannot master all the competencies of a traditional two-year vocational program, yet could benefit from the course work and probably be employable at certain entry level jobs within the field. Therefore, vocational teachers were asked to examine the student performance standards for their program and identify those most necessary for entry level employment. A job title was assigned to this group of performance standards that was a realistic alternative for ESE students. "Food Prep Helper" and "Lubrication Person" are examples of exit points for Commercial Foods and Auto Mechanics, respectively. Students are now given the option of pursuing an exit point or the full program. If an exit point is chosen based upon teacher recommendation, then parents are contacted and it is written into the IEP.

Students, teachers, and administrators in Pasco have all benefited from these programs. As a result, students are more appropriately placed, vocational teachers are receiving assistance in making modifications for ESE students, and ESE teachers are pleased with their students' success.

Gail T. Barnes
Vocational Education
Pasco County School District

**A Teacher's Perspective of CBI**

Moving instruction from the classroom into the community has been challenging and exciting. Scheduling transportation, locating funds, integrating disabled and nondisabled students, and meeting the needs of each student requires extra hours of creative planning. There have been those moments when I have wondered if it is worth the effort. The bottom line is "yes." The students are learning. They are learning skills that will be forever useful for them to live their lives as independently as possible. Our special students are learning social skills that normalize their behavior so they can participate in the community as unobtrusively as the next person. They are learning that they are important members of our society and react as such. Our local public librarian made a comment that exemplified our CBI philosophy. I always take three of my disabled children and three non-disabled peers to the library for checking out books. After several months of this procedure, the librarian smilingly said, "I have come to realize that your special children are just children like all the other children." "Yes," I said proudly, "they are, they really are."

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**Update of Florida Supported Competitive Employment Activities**

Through collaboration of local, state, private, and public agencies, Supported Employment is an established program in Florida. School districts and adult agencies are providing a smoother transition to work. Since 1985, Supported Employment has developed rapidly throughout Florida.

The Department of Education (DOE) established the Transitional Services Projects (TSP) grants in 1987. Bay, Palm Beach, Pinellas, and Seminole County School Districts, and FDLRS/Gateway Associate Center (serving Columbia, Hamilton, Lafayette, Madison, and Suwannee County School Districts) received three-year grants to develop and implement supported competitive employment programs for students with moderate and severe disabilities. These replicated the VCU, RRTC School-to-Work Transition Model. These projects developed strategies by which school districts could implement systems change to restructure curriculum, place students in individual supported competitive employment, and coordinate the provision of services with adult agencies to ensure follow-along support after graduation. Brochures, community-based instruction curriculum guides, and implementation manuals were developed.

The TSPs provide good examples of the diversity of programs that can be developed. Bay County, as a small rural district, may serve seven to eight supported employees in one year through one full and one half-time job coach. Pinellas County, a larger urban district, may serve 20 to 25 through six full-time job coaches. In Seminole County, students are travel-trained to walk or ride the city bus to work. In a rural project like FDLRS/Gateway, students must often rely on parents or car pooling for transportation.

FDLRS/Gateways's two job coaches were noncertified personnel serving students in five counties whereas Bay County employed two certified teachers as job coaches to serve one county.

Because of the success of the TSPs, the Projects for Expansion of Supported Employment in Florida's School Districts was established in 1990. Seminole County schools serves as the Coordinating Project and Bay, Pinellas, and FDLRS/Gateway (Hamilton) as the Support Projects. These Projects will provide technical assistance and training to 25 school districts over three years. They also will develop training and resource materials for use by teachers, parents, job coaches, and administrators. These materials are expected to be disseminated in 1993, product topics include supported employment, job coaching, work incentives, transition planning, interagency collaboration, and community-based instruction curriculum development. The following products are currently available at no cost:

Supported Employment Overview (slide-tape presentation)
Community-Based Curriculum Guides
Supported Competitive Employment Brochure
"Pathways" Newsletters
Parent Series (three Booklets)
Resource Guide for Job Coaches
Resource Guide on Administrative Issues
Resource Guide on Establishing Community-Based Instruction
Resource Guide on Establishing and Implementing Vocational Instruction in the Community for Students with Moderate and Severe Disabilities

The first ten Expansion Projects were funded to Dade, Duval, Lake, Lee, Leon, Martin, Orange, Polk, Sarasota, and Volusia County School Districts on July 1, 1990. Six projects were funded to Bradford, Broward, Jackson/Liberty/Calhoun, Brevard, Hernando, and Putnam in 1991. Five projects were funded to Citrus, Hardee, Osceola, Marion, St. Johns Counties, and Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind in 1992. Supported employment trainings will be conducted each year, and are open to school districts and agencies with priority given to the current year Expansion Projects.

Adult agencies and nonprofit organizations also have been in the forefront of supported competitive employment in Florida. The Florida Supported Employment Project was established in 1986, by the Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, to develop a statewide service delivery system to expand community-based employment opportunities. That same year Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's five-year State Plan provided for statewide establishment of over 30 projects to which clients would be referred to receive supported competitive employment (Department of Labor and Employment Security, 1988). This has resulted in 396 successfully closed supported employment cases during 1989. The Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitation Services' 1988 Comprehensive Services Plan, stated that students graduating from public school and stabilized in supported competitive employment would be identified as a priority for adult agency follow-along services.

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Kathy Becht
Exceptional Student Education
Seminole County School District

## Special Programs for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities at George Stone Area Vocational Technical Center

Over the past years, the special needs adult student population has continued to grow at our Center. In response, George Stone Area Vocational Technical Center has developed a system of services from intake through job placement to meet the individual needs of postsecondary/adult students with disabilities. The Center has an active Local Education Council for Special Needs made up of approximately 30 agency and local school district representatives.

A variety of vocational program options are available for students with disabilities, including the full range of regular vocational education programs. Special programs include a computer training program called "Data Entry Operations" which mainstreams students who are blind, visually handicapped, or severely physically disabled with regular students. These students are integrated into a business education program that is designed specifically for their special needs using the appropriate adaptive equipment. Additionally, all vocational training programs are open to any special needs students. The enrollment numbers of special needs students at the Center reflect their access and ability to mainstream. Last year the Center served 380 special needs students.

All students with disabilities receive special services to meet individual needs. These services include assessment, remediation, counseling, assistance with agency networking, interpreter services, curriculum modification, tutoring, and transition/job placement assistance. Students are monitored by the instructor and the Special Needs Coordinator according to the I.H.A.E.P. that is written for each student.

Students who are not currently receiving services are referred to the appropriate agency. The school acts as a catalytic agent between the community, the local secondary special education division, and state agencies, bringing about support for the student/potential student from a variety of sources. (This past school year, the Director of the Center, Mr. Bob Lindner, received the state award from Vocational Rehabilitation for Transitional Services provided for postsecondary education.)

Special techniques are employed to provide accurate assessment for placement in the vocational program that optimizes the potential of the student. Most recently, the Center has purchased the Realistic Assessment of Vocational Experiences (RAVE) Program to better assess the needs of Worker's Compensation students. RAVE, a computerized assessment of academics, vocational interests, and physical limitations, projects both realistic jobs (for vocational training) and related jobs (those that can be OJT'd).

George Stone Area Vocational Technical Center is able to continue to meet the ever increasing needs of our special needs population because of the total commitment of the school administration, the faculty and staff at the Center, and the cooperative networking support of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Division of Blind Services, Health and Rehabilitative Services, and other agencies. The strong instructional program combined with the appropriate support services leads to successful transition from school to work for students with disabilities. We here in Escambia County have learned that whatever it takes to help an individual become all that they can be is what is most important. When one student succeeds, we all succeed.

Gretchen Jarman, Escambia County School District

### Postsecondary Special Needs Co-op Program

Mid-Florida Tech offers a two-year transition program to provide support to former exceptional education students as they graduate from high school and enter the world of work. High school graduates maintain employment while monitored by the program coordinator. Students attend regular evening meetings on life management skills. This program is open to students from all exceptionalities with a variety of academic skill levels.

Students register for 25 hours of cooperative education which includes 22 hours of on-the-job training (OJT) and a three hour night class in employability skills each week. This scheduling allows students to work full time while they continue in school. The classroom component is designed around group work and a discussion format to accommodate various academic levels and learning styles. The focus of instruction is on counseling, life management skills, social skills, and job retention. The OJT component relies heavily upon job development and case-by-case job placement. The Coordinator works closely with employers to determine additional training needs and to resolve situations that relate to the students' disabling condition and/or home situation. The local community is involved in this Co-Op program through providing additional training on site, the use of guest speakers for classroom instruction, and trips to local restaurants and attractions to practice social skills.

The effectiveness of this program can be seen through the number of students who have been able to stay on the job for more than two years, earn an average starting salary above minimum wage, receive full employee benefits, and become taxpaying members of the community.

L. Claire Blanchard
Mid-Florida Technical Institute
Orange County School District

# CHAPTER 3

# TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO ADULT AND COMMUNITY LIVING

Transition is a word that is used to describe movement from one phase of life to the next. In the current context, transition means the movement of students with disabilities from school to community living. As a result of the 1990 amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), services needed by students with disabilities to make a successful transition have come to the forefront. The following papers provide some valuable general issues and directions in transition and some specific best practices from small, medium, and large districts. In addition, some of the corollaries of transition-interagency collaboration and postschool follow-up are discussed.

## Issues and Directions

### *Introduction*

The transition from adolescence into adulthood is one experience that almost all adults from various cultures and socioeconomic backgrounds experience with some degree of difficulty. Becoming an independent, responsible, and productive member of the community can be frightening and traumatic for some individuals. For others, this transition can be even more troublesome. There is much research suggesting that the transition from adolescence to adulthood is especially difficult for young adults with disabilities .

Since 1985, there have been numerous follow-up studies examining what happened to former special education students who made the transition into adulthood. The findings are generally not positive (Hasazi, Gordon, & Roe, 1985). In terms of the vocational adjustment of young adults with disabilities, follow-up studies have suggested employment rates which vary from a high of 69 percent (Mithaug, Horiuchi, & Fanning, 1985) to a low of 41 percent (Edgar, 1987). Employment rates found by these studies varied greatly by the type and level of disability, with individuals with learning disabilities, sensory impairments, and speech and language impairments generally finding employment more often than students with mental disabilities, emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairments, and multiple disabilities. It is important to note, however, that even when the employment rates of individuals with disabilities approached two-thirds in some follow-up studies, the salaries earned by these former special education students tended to be very low (Affleck, Edgar, Levine, & Kortering, 1990). It appeared that young adults with disabilities fortunate enough to be employed were working part-time in minimum-wage jobs or tended to be in sheltered settings earning sub-minimum wages.

Participation of young adults with disabilities in postsecondary education or training has been examined by relatively few follow-up studies. There is some good news and some bad news about the postsecondary participation of young adults with disabilities. The good news is that individuals with disabilities and nondisabled individuals do not seem to differ significantly in terms of their enrollment in vocational technical programs (Fairweather, & Shaver, 1991). However, in enrollment in community colleges and four-year

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institutions, individuals with disabilities do not fare as well as their non-disabled counterparts.

As with employment, postsecondary participation of young adults with disabilities varies greatly by disability label, ranging from 42.6 percent for students with visual disabilities to 4.8 percent for students who are multiply impaired (Fairweather, & Shaver, 1991).

Two very recent follow-up studies have examined the postschool adjustment of young adults with disabilities in Florida (Florida Department of Education, 1990; Menchetti et al., 1991). Follow-up data collected by these studies show that Florida does not appear to have a more serious transition problem than the nation as a whole; however, it is also clear that Floridians with disabilities continue to experience difficulty in making a successful transition from high school to adult life.

*Legislation*

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (P.L. 101-476) redefines the parameters of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to include transition services. Signed into law on October 30, 1990, this piece of legislation includes the following components relating to transition (National Association of State Directors of Special Education, 1991):

- Transition is defined as a coordinated set of activities for students, designed with an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including:
    - postsecondary education
    - vocational training
    - integrated employment (including supported employment)
    - continuing and adult education
    - adult services, independent living
    - community participation.
- The coordinated set of activities shall be based upon the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and shall include:
    - instruction
    - community experiences
    - the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, when appropriate
    - acquisition of daily living skills, when appropriate
    - functional vocational evaluation.
- The IEP will include a statement of the needed transition services for students beginning no later than age 16 and annually thereafter (and younger when determined appropriate for the individual), including, when appropriate, a statement of the interagency responsibilities or linkages (or both) before the student leaves the school setting.
- In the case where a participating agency other than the educational agency fails to provide agreed upon services, the educational agency shall reconvene the IEP team to identify alternative strategies to meet the transition objectives

A central theme in IDEA is the provision that transition services should be outcome-oriented. When planning for these outcomes, emphasis should be based on the level of support needed for success rather than on an individual's disabilities. The following section highlights issues which often surface in the process of assisting individuals with disabilities to plan for their transition into each outcome area. Although solutions to these issues are unable to be addressed in this article, it is important to raise them for future consideration.

## *Specific Issues in Transition*

### Postsecondary Education and Training

The options available to exceptional people are the same options available to everyone. These include colleges, universities, postsecondary, vocational, community colleges, technical schools, adult education, military training, and apprenticeship programs.

### Employment

A cascade of work settings is available to exceptional adults ranging from settings most like those of non-disabled adults to more sheltered settings. Work settings include competitive employment, supported competitive employment, work enclaves, mobile work crews, and sheltered workshops.

### Living Environment

A variety of living options are available to exceptional adults, allowing them to live as independently as possible and to become part of the community. These options include independent living, semi-independent living, living at home, group homes, foster care, and institutional care.

### Social/Interpersonal Networks.

Individuals with disabilities, like all humans, need social and interpersonal networks comprised of people who offer love, support, and friendship. These networks might include family, friends, co-workers, and significant others. Unfortunately, there are few organized leisure activities available that encourage individuals with disabilities to make friends, have a good time, relax, travel, and become part of the community; and peer support groups are not readily available to exceptional adults.

## *Promising Practices*

One solution to these issues is better understanding of exceptional adults. This understanding can be fostered through awareness of the needs and provisions of services necessary to assist individuals with disabilities to make a smooth transition into the world outside of school. Professionals can learn about promising practices related to transition through programs offered by Florida State University and the University of Florida. For a complete description of these programs for promising practices in school districts, see pages 67-77

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## Interagency Workshops

A priority of Commissioner Castor's is to better meet the needs of Florida's students through interagency collaboration. In response to this priority, the Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students, the Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation developed and implemented a series of interagency meetings on building effective interagency relationships and developing functional cooperative agreements and action plans to meet the transition services needs of students with disabilities. The overall purposes of the cooperative relationships were for district teams to strengthen cooperative relationships, develop functional interagency agreements and action plans to meet the educational, transition, and rehabilitative needs of students with disabilities, and identify outcomes and plan strategies for attaining these outcomes for a specific group of students with disabilities.

District teams included a core of representatives from exceptional student education, vocational education, and vocational rehabilitation. Additional participants represented Developmental Services, Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health, Blind Services, Private Industry Council, and other agencies serving individuals with disabilities.

In Spring of 1992, nine district teams began to participate in initial and follow-up meetings to accomplish the stated workshop objectives. Workshop participants reported positive outcomes from the interagency activities. These included signed cooperative agreements, increased interagency communication and commitment, expansion of teams to include additional agency representatives, revised transition planning procedures, increased referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation and Health and Rehabilitative Services, increased vocational options for students, interagency procedures changed to facilitate services, more continuity between programs, and involvement of additional district personnel in interagency activities such as workshops. A *Guide for Developing Effective Interagency Teams* will be available from the BEES Clearinghouse/Information Center in the fall of 1993.

## Postschool Follow-up And Program Improvement

The Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students was awarded a four-year federal grant in 1988, to develop an interactive model for systems change based on analysis of outcome data. The purposes of the project were to assist local school districts in establishing a database that would provide follow-up information on students with disabilities who have left the public school system and using that information to make changes in instructional programs and delivery systems that would improve post-school outcomes.

### *Post-School Information Data Collection*

Martin and Polk County School Districts were selected to participate in the Tracking grant as pilot projects. Each district established a Local Advisory Group comprised of parents, business people, and other community members to assist project personnel in delineating and prioritizing desirable post-school outcomes for exceptional students. This input was used to develop interview forms that have been used to collect post-school information on students who have disabilities for the past three summers (1989 - 1991).

A state-level Data Collection Work Group comprised of representatives from Divisions and Bureaus within the Department of Education examined data reporting methods and elements that are now in place and how these might be used to assist districts in following up school leavers. This group developed a process to determine employment and post-secondary education of all students with disabilities exiting the school system and provide this information to school districts. A data file was created within Division of Public Schools Automated Student Information System that isolates certain information on students who graduated or dropped out during the previous school year. This data file is designed to be accessed annually by the Florida Education and Training Placement Information System (FETPIP). Using a two-file data match process, FETPIP obtains information on employment, post-secondary education, and federal military and civil service of these students.

### *Instructional and Delivery System Revision*

Each of the pilot districts established an Instructional Program Work Group. These groups had several tasks: (1) to identify program and instructional delivery options available to ESE students, and the extent to which they are accessing them (2) to identify and overcome district level administrative and instructional barriers to accessing existing programs (3) to recommend changes in course offerings and instructional delivery options based on the outcomes of this summer's follow-up study and (4) to identify and help overcome barriers to the changes recommended.

Changes that need to be made at the state level have been identified and an action plan has been developed. This plan includes technical assistance and dissemination of materials to districts in areas such as writing effective transition IEPs, community-based training, vocational education for students with disabilities, and use of the mainstream cost factor. Other responsibilities of state level personnel include working with other agencies and programs to coordinate, create, and expand promising practices and reviewing current laws, policies, and procedures to remove any barriers to successful school completion and transition into adult life.

In addition, a computer software program has been developed that will assist districts in using follow-up information. This system will allow users to generate summary reports on the relationship between in-school curriculum and post-school quality of life.

### *Focus on Outcomes Series*

The Tracking System Project has initiated a publication series entitled Focus on Outcomes. This series features various aspects of exceptional student education program outcome measures. Four documents are available from the Bureau of Education Clearinghouse/Information Center:

Document 1, *Referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation by Florida School Districts*
Document 2, *Postschool Follow-up Activities for Handicapped Students in Florida School Districts*
Document 3, *Comparisons of Graduates and Non-Graduates of Programs for Students with Handicaps in Two Florida School Districts*

Document 5, *Increasing Numbers of Graduates: Profiles of Successful Exceptional Student Education Programs in Florida.*

In addition, the *Florida Postschool Follow-up Procedures Manual* has been distributed to school districts. Additional copies are available from the Clearinghouse.

# PROMISING PRACTICES RELATED TO TRANSITION

- Promising Practices in Transition in a Large School District
- Promising Transition Practices in a Middle Size School District
- Promising Transition Practices in a Small School District
- Administration of Transition Services: Partnership for Success
- The FSU Transition Specialist Training Program
- The University of Florida Transition Programs
- Postschool Follow-up in Martin County
- Postschool Follow-up in Polk County

## Promising Practices in Transition in a Large School District (Dade)

The transition process places demands on any school system: teachers, administrators, and counselors are called on to reach out to community agencies, parents, and businesses and additional paperwork, time for scheduling, and actual contacts are an added responsibility for all involved. In a large district, these additional responsibilities can be overwhelming and detrimental to the transition process.

The key to making this process successful is commitment to transition goals. The results of any procedures and management of a transition process are not readily available as feedback to those involved in the implementation. For this reason, flexibility and change need to be acceptable for our students to fully benefit.

The following practices have proven to be helpful in developing a model for transition in Dade County Public Schools (DCPA). During the 1989-90 school year, students participated in a transition conference with involvement from community agencies, service providers, and community colleges.

### Policy/Procedures

The delivery system in DCPS has been modified over the three years it has been in effect. Inclusion in the District's Pupil Progression Plan provides for clarity of policy and procedures for administration.

Initially, transition conferences were held in the ninth and 11 grades only for those students pursuing a special diploma. However, follow-up data and agency input resulted in the change to eighth and 12 grade. The eighth grade career vocational conference focuses on appropriate vocational career choices for all ESE students, while the 12 grade transition/exit conference is an actual referral conference.

### Training of Personnel

Training of both school system and agency/community personnel in the concept of transition is paramount to the success of the program. School personnel need to refocus their goals of instruction to those of students in employment and/or community involvement and away from graduation as the end goal. Agency personnel need to be made aware of their role as seekers in this process rather than passive recipients of clients. The vocational placement specialists provide training to agency personnel on how to communicate with students and specific parents. Multicultural issues are also addressed, as well as how to interpret psychological reports and other evaluation reports prepared by the school system.

### Coordination

The identification of a contact person who knows the transition process and is familiar with community agencies is essential. In Dade, this person is the Vocational Placement Specialist. Although their role is primarily to place graduating seniors who have participated in vocational education courses into employment, they also provide initial referrals, technical assistance to schools and community agencies in training of personnel, and the scheduling and conducting of the transition conference.

### Scheduling/Planning

In most senior high schools, twenty-five to fifty students from each of the 28 high schools may be participating in transition conferences during the spring of their senior year; scheduling individual conferences with parents and personnel who may provide transitional services district wide is therefore a priority. Most senior high schools set aside several hours on a specific date and invite parents, students, and representatives from the agencies to attend a formal presentation. During the presentation, the concept of transition, the individualized transition plan, and the process for referrals is discussed. Each attending agency also provides a summary of its services including referral procedures, timelines, and availability of services.

After each presentation, agency representatives are available for parents and students to meet with and discuss individual needs or questions. After the group meeting, teachers meet with parents and identify services the student may need upon graduation and assist with formal referral procedures. In many cases, initial referrals are made on the spot with one-to-one contact between parent and agency representative.

When parents are not available, teachers assist students in identifying appropriate agencies for future referrals.

Transition conference dates are planned county-wide to diminish conflict of dates and times with agencies who have limited personnel.

### Data

The resulting anticipated transition services are coded on the formal Individualized Transition Plan and are entered by the school in the District's student database. The data is retrievable by the district office and may be summarized to show patterns and to provide accountability. Vocational placement specialists monitor their schools through the on-line data reports and provide technical assistance.

### Involvement of Agency/Cooperative Agreement

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has a counselor assigned to every senior high school. The vocational placement specialist and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation counselor have established a working relationship that allows for a smooth referral process. Other community-based agencies funded through JTPA such as the North Dade Chamber of Commerce, also provide liaison services with the schools though the vocational placement specialist.

District personnel meet regularly with representatives from Developmental Services, Division of Blind Services, Deaf Services Bureau of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, community colleges, and other community agencies to discuss the referral and transition process.

A formal cooperative agreement between the school system, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, and the Private Industry Council is in the final stages of development. This agreement addresses all aspects of the transition process and the roles and responsibilities of each of the participants.

Twyla Grandchamp, Exceptional Student Education, Dade County School District

**Promising Transition Practices in a Middle Size School District (Sarasota)**

*"It is about search, too, for*
*daily meaning as well as daily bread,*
*for recognition as well as cash,*
*for astonishment rather than*
*a Monday through Friday sort of dying.*
*Perhaps, immortality, too, is part of the quest."*

Overview

"Transition" has various meanings in different situations and applications. Currently, for professionals working with exceptional students, transition is a key word to connote a process experienced by students with disabilities. In Sarasota County Schools, the transition process begins in grade eight, includes high school years, the point of exit or graduation, adult and/or post-secondary education, and linkage with appropriate adult service providers to ensure a continuum of services beyond the schooling system. The intent of the transition process is to enable these students to access greater opportunities for becoming contributing rather than dependent Floridians.

The steps we have taken in Sarasota County, considered a middle-sized school district in Florida, could be implemented in smaller and/or larger school districts. The driving force in establishing an effective transition process is a commitment at the highest levels in the Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Department the levels of support needed to accomplish the mission---not necessarily additional dollars. We think there are several keys to establishing and enhancing an effective transition process, regardless of the school district's size.

One key to establishing an effective transition process is creating the process and managing it as a specific, identified function within the ESE Department, as one person's direct responsibility. This ensures that the focus of responsibility for transition is "everyone's" responsibility, and therefore, "no one's" responsibility. In Sarasota County this responsibility is met by the ESE Vocational Program Specialist.

Equally important in establishing effective transition is the need for proactive interagency cooperation and collaboration. This key element cannot be overemphasized. No single agency has sufficient resources to effectively and efficiently provide a full continuum of services to meet the needs of persons with disabilities. It is only through a concerted effort of interagency collaboration that such a continuum of services may be established. The Vocational Interagency Council of Sarasota, comprised of executive representatives from the school system, state rehabilitation and employment agencies, private enterprise, local rehabilitation facilities, and parents, has been operating for more than four years with the single mission of enhancing transition from school to community for students with disabilities. The establishment of an effective interagency council leads to the design of a transition process.

Elements of The Transition Process

The transition process in Sarasota County schools may be illustrated by the following diagram, designed to identify the array from which student program options are considered and selected:

Brief Descriptors of Programs and/or Transition Services:

- Career Education: Learning Activity Packets (LAP) - comprehensive program designed to introduce students to self-awareness and evaluation, career clusters, employability skills, and vocational evaluation.
- Project ExPLO: Exploring and Preparing for Local Occupations - an opportunity for students to job shadow and experience firsthand many of the occupations within the domain of the school board, OJT opportunities, with possible hiring by the school board.
- JET Program: Job Exploration Program - comprehensive program which integrates vocational and academic curricula, and features community based work training experience.
- BUY Program: Business United with Youth - a community-based experience, which features training experiences at several local businesses, and serves as a transition into the Supported Employment Program.
- Supported Employment Program: comprehensive program which features community-based paid employment, in an integrated setting, utilizing the individual placement model, and incorporating ongoing follow-along services through adult service providers.
- ITP: Individual Transition Plan - formal plan developed in conjunction with the IEP, prior to student's 15th birthday, and updated annually. Addresses in-school and post-school services and anticipated needs.
- Transition to Voc-Tech Center: half-day vocational programs at area center for high school students, featuring on-site support services provided by ESE teacher
- Referral to Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR): a key transition partner; appropriate students are linked with DVR (an eligibility program) as early as age 16 to facilitate successful transition from school to work.
- Referral to Health & Rehabilitative Services Developmental Services (DS) Program: a key transition partner; appropriate students are

linked with DS (an eligibility program) during their last year of school, to ensure ongoing follow-along services.

- Partnership with local Private Industry Council (PIC): a key transition partner; the Manasota Industry Council contracts with ESE to provide employment related support services.
- Partnership with local rehabilitation facilities: key transition partners; local facilities (no fewer than five) assist the transition process by assisting with vocational evaluation, summer programs, supported employment, and supported and independent living.
- Partnership with local community college: through mutual agreements with Manatee Community College, the ESE Department facilitates transition of students seeking post-secondary higher education.

Summary

Much is happening in Sarasota County to prepare students with disabilities for successful transition into living and working in the community. Much more still needs to be accomplished. Through the continuing collaborative efforts of the ESE Department, parents, adult service providers, post-secondary education, and local business and industry, Sarasota County is becoming a more open and receptive community, where persons with a disability live, work, and enjoy leisure pursuits in normalized settings.

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**Promising Transition Practices in a Small School District (Levy)**

What Is Transition?

Transition, as prioritized by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, is the planned movement of students with disabilities from school to work and adult life, through coordinated involvement of education, adult services, private industry, and community.

The primary goal is to develop and implement a cooperative planning program of integrated transitional services for youths with disabilities. The focus is student, parent, and teacher motivation to attain goals and provision of services, training, and successful employment according to individual capabilities.

This transition model is in compliance with Florida State Statutes and federal law.

*Target Populations*

Specific Learning Disabled (SLD), Emotionally Handicapped (EH), and Educable Mentally Handicapped (EMH) students were initially targeted for the transition process in Levy County. Starting with the 1990-1991 school year, Trainable Mentally Handicapped (TMH) and Profoundly Mentally Handicapped (PMH) populations have been included in the transition planning process.

Implications for a Small Rural District - Levy County

Before legislation mandated the transition process, most school systems' students with disabilities were not guided into employment opportunities or postsecondary education appropriate for their abilities. Systems had varying degrees of vocational training and education experiences available for students with disabilities. Also, communication between school personnel and adult service providers was limited.

Facilitating students from school is not a one-step process. Levy County has incorporated a Special Diploma, with a strong vocational curriculum, into its graduation options. This curriculum was adapted from Leon County's LITE (Leon's Intensive Training for Employment) curriculum. The curriculum has several components, including:

classroom instruction for on-the-job-training
on-campus employment training for credit
after school employment
paid summer employment (JTPA Summer Youth Program)
paid competitive employment during the school year
transition.

Students pursuing a standard diploma also are eligible to participate in classroom training. This is counted as an elective credit toward their graduation requirements. These students also may participate in competitive employment.

Individual Transition Plans (ITPs) are written in the senior year for students identified as most at risk of being unable to attain employment or independent living after graduation.

## LEVY COUNTY SECONDARY TRANSITION PROCESS

End of 8th Grade .......................... Initiation

1. Testing - TAP, PIC II, VIP Jr. (second semester)
2. Begin transition folder
   Areas to address: Student information
   Academic levels
   Medical needs
   Personal/Family relationships
   Leisure/Recreation
3. Parent/Student survey
4. Reporting
5. Information on vocational opportunities
6. Diploma options discussion and decision

9th Grade .................................. Planning

1. Transition Profile reviewed, updated
   Areas to address All previous areas.
   Initiate-personal management, vocational training
2. Occupational training course
3. Vocational course consultation

10th Grade .............................. Programming

1. Transition Profile reviewed, updated
   Areas to address: All previous areas. Initiate - transportation, financial
2. Vocational course consultation
3. Employability skills course

11th Grade .............................. Transition Planning

1. Transition Profile review/updated
   Areas to address: All previous areas. Initiate - living arrangements, agency eligibility
2. TAP, PIC I, VIP (1st semester)
3. Employability skills or on the job training course

12th Grade .............................. Transition

1. Transition Profile reviewed/updated
2. Individual transition plan
   Identification of specific referral and follow-up services in all transition areas

Post School .............................. Follow-up Survey

## Transition Team

Individuals responsible for participating in the planning and decision-making affecting a student's educational career need to be identified. These individuals comprise the education transition team and include the student, parent/guardian, exceptional education teacher, transition specialist, and any other school or professional person involved with the student.

Team members vital to the transition process outside the school system include representatives of state and local agencies offering services necessary for successful transition from school to work and independent living. These may include but are not limited to the Levy County School Board, Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Training Partnership Act agencies, Department of Job Training, Social Security, Health and Rehabilitative Services, Levy Association for Retarded Citizens, Central Florida Community College, and Division of Developmental Services (HRS).

## Conclusion

Transition from school work and adult life is a process which includes high school, graduation, employment, postsecondary education, or services of agencies. For transition to be effective, it is imperative that cooperation and collaborative effort exists between the education transition team and representatives of state and local agencies offering services necessary for a successful transition from school to work and independent living.

Levy County, a small school district, is on its way to a promising transition practice through maintaining the cooperative and collaborative effort.

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## Administration of Transition Services: Partnership For Success

The word transition has numerous meanings. To Martin County Exceptional Education, transition means successful preparation and planning necessary to ensure that students are ready to meet life's challenges as they exit public school. Transition is the shared responsibility of ESE teachers, vocational education teachers,administrators, guidance personnel, parents and students. Through collaborative efforts of all responsible parties, student options are expanded, thus ensuring a smooth passage from school to community integration.

The transition process is successful in Martin County largely because of communication between all departments. Exceptional Education and Vocational Education Departments regularly sponsor activities to benefit ESE students. Through involvement in a Federal Tracking Project, barriers to student success have been identified and systematically overcome. Guidance personnel and ESE personnel continue to cooperatively plan four-year schedules to allow for optional vocational continuums while students also fulfill academic requirements. Transition personnel have helped to develop increased on and off-campus work situations as well as supported competitive employment opportunities for students with moderate and severe disabilities

Direct involvement on a continuing basis with adult service provider agencies also contributes to increased understanding of postsecondary options for exceptional students. The ability to present agency information to parents and students and to provide a liaison from the ESE Department has contributed to a timely and accurate referral process.

To ensure proper scheduling in high school elective courses, it is necessary to identify each student's area of interest. During the eighth grade year, an interest inventory is administered to all ESE students. Preparation is underway for ninth grade students to take a vocational aptitude assessment for the four-year plan meeting with guidance and parents. Information gathered through interest and aptitude assessments helps to ensure that proper vocational courses are scheduled. Lastly, an 11th grade aptitude assessment assists students with planning for post-secondary activities.

Transition planning is considered a dropout preventative measure because adequate and informed long-term planning provides scheduling that appeals to students. Innovative scheduling increases chances for student success thus increasing the probability that student outcomes will be achieved. Students who properly plan not only can achieve academic success, but complete a vocational program and graduate with marketable skills.

Martin County Exceptional Education believes that the transition process is a critical element in providing students with the opportunity for optimal success both in school and in their adult lives. However, without the cooperative partnership of all school personnel, parent, students and adult service providers, the transition process would not work. The infusion of transitional services into all other program options affords students the opportunity to upgrade the quality of their life.

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**The FSU Transition Specialist Training Program**

At Florida State University, Department of Special Education, special education and related service personnel have the opportunity to obtain specialized training while pursuing or updating their teacher certification. The FSU Transition Specialist Training Program includes both multidisciplinary coursework and field-based experiences in:

- vocational assessment and evaluation
- career development and planning
- individualized transition planning
- special needs vocational education
- postsecondary education supports
- supported employment
- adult services delivery systems
- family supports
- independent living
- recreational supports
- other services and support needed to assist youth with disabilities in moving successfully from school to post-school activities.

An FSU Transition Specialist Trainee may elect to take courses in a variety of disciplines to familiarize themselves with the issues and professional culture of transition-related fields. This multidisciplinary focus allows FSU Transition Specialist Trainees to experience first-hand interagency cooperation so important for successful transition. In addition to special education, FSU Transition Specialist Trainees are encouraged to take one or more courses in:

- counseling psychology (career development)
- vocational rehabilitation
- leisure studies
- vocational education
- business
- other areas that prepare Transition Specialists to better meet the needs of youth with disabilities.

In addition to coursework requirements, FSU Transition Specialist Trainees are required to complete at least one field-based transition practicum. These field experiences allow trainees to apply classroom learning to real-life transition settings under the supervision of their FSU instructor. Some settings that may serve as Transition Specialists Practicum sites are:

- special education classrooms
- regular education classrooms
- vocational education settings
- community college support settings
- supported employment settings
- adult service settings
- residential and recreational settings.

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## The University of Florida Transition Programs

In addition to masters' and doctoral level training emphasizing secondary special education and transition services, the University of Florida has two programs which address promising practices in transition.

### Project RITS: Reciprocal Instructional for Transition Specialists

Project RITS, a federally funded personnel preparation program administered through UF's Special Education Department, prepares transition specialists to work with students who have mild or moderate disabilities. This preparation develops transition competencies in both classroom instruction and program development. The focus of the project is personnel preparation in providing transition services to youth with special needs.

Preparation is based on a set of competencies adopted from existing transition programs which relate to topics that include interagency collaboration, curriculum-based assessment, support services, individualized planning, and action research. A summer institute, which brings together in-service teachers/professionals and pre-service students for intensive reciprocal instruction, is the cornerstone of Project RITS. A major component of the summer institute is conducting a needs assessment (in each of the pre service teacher's schools) and developing a plan of action to address identified needs. During the Fall semester, in-service teachers and pre-service students work as a team implementing the planned transition-related program changes in the home schools.

### Florida Network: Information and Services for Adolescents and Adults with Special Needs

Florida Network is housed in UF's Special Education Department and is a clearinghouse for submission and retrieval of preservice/inservice information, best practices, and policy and curriculum materials concerning adolescents and adults with special needs. To help educators gain knowledge in secondary and postsecondary education, Florida Network maintains as its primary focus programming needs of adolescents and adults with special needs. Florida Network has been identifying exemplary programs and programming needs through a statewide study of best practices, relating to the provision of services to secondary and postsecondary individuals with special needs. Further, it acts as a clearinghouse for policy and curriculum materials from all counties in Florida. Information gathered is disseminated through inservice and preservice programs, a Florida Network newsletter, and other forms of technical assistance.

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## Postschool Follow-up in Martin County

Since 1987 Martin County Exceptional Student Education (ESE) has placed a major emphasis on the transition process for exceptional students. Leaving public school and making the transition to postsecondary education, the work place, and community integration can be a traumatic process for all concerned. The goal of exceptional education is to prepare students for the challenges that await them.

Having the opportunity to participate in a Federal Tracking Pilot project has allowed Martin County some flexibility to evaluate barriers exceptional students face on regular campuses. The development of strategies to overcome identified barriers has been a direct outcome of the Tracking Project, and parallels expected outcomes of the *Blueprint for Career Preparation*. That is, every student will graduate with marketable skills and be prepared to enter the labor market.

The most interesting aspect of the Tracking Project has been the development of an Instructional Program Work Group (IPWG). This group is comprised of ESE teachers, vocational instructors, district and school-based administrators, and guidance personnel. During the first year of the grant the IPWG spent considerable time evaluating information reported by former students regarding their present situations and the programs they received in the public school system to prepare them for life's challenges. The group also reviewed the courses taken by former students and assessed what impact they had on the students' present work situations, community integration, and interpersonal relationships.

During the second year of grant project, the IPWG identified barriers to academic and vocational success faced by students. One of the major barriers identified was lack of success in vocational courses. Items such as lack of opportunity to explore vocational options, too much academic work in vocational courses, and lack of awareness regarding the continuum of vocational options were listed. Other barriers identified were lack of functional curriculum for ESE students, underdeveloped four-year plans, the teaching of skills in artificial environments, and not enough cooperation among special education, regular education, and vocational education.

An Action Plan was developed by the IPWG, and systematic changes for the benefit of exceptional students have taken place. Some of the positive changes that have occurred are:

- cooperative development of four year plans with ESE and Guidance personnel, students, and parents
- increased opportunities for ESE students to work on and off-campus

- initiation of a Supported Competitive Employment project for moderately and severely handicapped students
- development of a video presentation promoting the continuum of vocational education options for ESE students
- increased use of the community as a classroom from the elementary level to the secondary level.

There have been opportunities for all members of the Instructional Program Work Group to meet on a regular basis and jointly evaluate methods to improve instruction for exceptional students. This has been, and continues to be, the greatest achievement of Martin County's involvement in the Tracking System Project.

### Postschool Follow-up in Polk County

One of the purposes of the Tracking System Project is to make changes in instructional programs and delivery systems that will foster development of desirable post-school outcomes based on the follow-up information. In Polk County school district, this is being accomplished through the school level Instructional Program Work Group (IPWG). The IPWG consists of representatives from three area high schools and Exceptional Student Education Centers. Membership includes ESE teachers, vocational education teachers, guidance counselors, and ESE curriculum specialists.

The first task of the IPWG was to identify the expected outcomes of the secondary Exceptional Student Education program. This was accomplished by interviewing business people, parents, students, and school personnel. Polk County's secondary ESE program's expected outcomes (adopted by the School Board of Polk County for its Pupil Progression Plan) are that students will be prepared to be productive, self-sufficient citizens by demonstrating: (1) survival skills, (2) employability skills, and (3) healthy interpersonal relationships.

The second major activity of the IPWG was to define the current secondary Exceptional Student Education instructional program and the policies and procedures that effect secondary programs. Part of this activity was to identify the perceived barriers to student access and participation in the instructional programs. This information was compared with the data collected from student and parent interviews. From this process, the following barriers were identified:

- The attendance policies have not had a positive effect on Exceptional students' attendance
- Part-time students have few instructional program option
- Middle school and junior high school's curriculum offer minimal career awareness
- There is a lack of formal communication between the junior and senior high schools
- High school teachers' schedules do not allow Exceptional Student Education and regular education teachers time for consultation
- High school level Exceptional Student Education teachers have limited involvement in the off-campus work experience program (OTP)
- Students are not systematically taught social/emotional skills

- High school ESE teachers and guidance counselors have limited information about vocational programs

The third task of the IPWG was to develop strategies to decrease or eliminate the identified barriers. The following strategies have been implemented and/or recommended:

- Attendance policies should be implemented consistently throughout the county. ESE personnel should be represented on school based attendance committees. The student's Individual Education Plan should address goals and strategies to increase school attendance.
- A new Specialized Technology Education Program was developed for part-time exceptional students. This program will be offered at Traviss Vocational School.
- Middle school teachers have been provided with training and materials for career development, using the Career Pathway Curriculum.
- High school teachers will attend the annual review in which the student transitions to the high school.
- The use of cooperative consultation is being encouraged in all high schools. High school teachers receive inservice points for training and implementation of cooperative consultation, as well as additional funding.
- The staffing plan was changed to include an additional planning period for high school ESE teachers who have 15 students in the work experience program. This provides time for teachers to visit the business sites.
- The *Personal and Social Responsibility* curriculum by Constance Dembrowsky and the Gershaw, Goldstein, Sprafkin, and Klein's *Skillstreaming the Adolescent* have been purchased for all of the secondary Exceptional Student Education Programs. Inservice training has been planned and a demonstration site has been established.
- A video presentation of vocational programs has been developed.
- One guidance counselor will be designated to serve all Exceptional Student Education students at each high school.

In summary, as a result of the Tracking System Project, the following changes have been made:

**Policies and Procedures**

- Pupil Progression Plan
- Staffing Plan
- Student Code of Conduct
- Inservice Training Plan.

**Curriculum**

- Purchase and training in the use of the Dembrowsky social skills curriculum
- Purchase and training in Skillstreaming
- Increased use of the Cooperative Consultation Model
- Use of the Career Pathways Curriculum.

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# CHAPTER 4
# APPLYING LABOR MARKET INFORMATION TO EDUCATION

Occupations in Florida are growing most rapidly in the industries of Services and Retail Trade. The shift in the emphasis toward the development of services from the production of goods is not new and parallels changing demographics in the U.S. population (*Occupational Outlook Handbook, 1992-93 Edition*). To accommodate this growth, there is a need among employers and educators for relevant career development and occupational resources. The Bureau of Career Development and Educational Improvement heavily relies upon publications and resources of the Bureau of Labor Market Information of the Florida Department of Labor. Three main resources are: *The Enhanced Guide for Occupational Exploration, The Occupational Outlook Handbook, 1992-93 Edition,* and the computerized "*Florida Occupational Information-System*" (FLOIS). Bureau of Career Development and Educational Improvement products produced as a result of this research, include: *The Guide, VIEW Careers, Florida Career Information Delivery System* (FCIDS), and *CHOICES*.

*The Enhanced Guide for Occupational Exploration*, is published by JIST Works, Inc. and is based on the *Guide for Occupational Exploration* originally published by the U.S. Department of Labor. The descriptions of 2,500 occupations cover over 95% of all jobs in the U.S. economy. It is well organized and outlines 12 career interest areas, work groups and codes used in the book.

The Enhanced Guide combines the original information with data from the Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, and other sources.

Based on extensive research and occupational analysis, the Department of Labor divided all jobs into one of 12 career interest areas. This research resulted in the publication of the *Guide for Occupational Exploration*. The significance of this research is that job seekers, job changers, students and career counselors are provided ways of cross-referencing "the kinds of activities a person likes the most" to today's jobs.

The 12 career interest areas are: Artistic 01, Scientific 02, Plants and Animals 03, Protective 04, Mechanical 05, Industrial 06, Business Detail 07, Selling 08, Accommodating 09, Humanitarian 10, Leading-Influencing 11, and Physical Performing 12. Based on characteristics of these interest areas that may be appealing, the user can:

> look up an occupation by the industry in which it is most commonly employed, such as Air Transportation, Business Services, Construction, Dairy Products, Education, etc.,
>
> look up an occupation by the level of educational degree usually required,
>
> look up an occupation by the level of skills required with data, people, or things. For example, is the job seeker skilled in synthesizing data or

comparing data; negotiating with people or serving people; setting up things (as in machine set-up) or operating equipment, and of course, the user can look up occupations alphabetically.

The *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 1992-93 Edition,* is published by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. While this also describes jobs and categorizes them by industry, much focus is given to labor force and industry trends. Each occupation is presented from the perspective of trends, or changes, in the needs of employers to profit and produce high quality goods and services in today's competitive global marketplace. The student or job seeker will find a wealth of information on such topics as:

> Working Conditions, hours of work, and physical demands a worker may expect,
>
> Employment, industries most likely to employ a particular occupation; and where, in the U.S. employment is most likely to be found,
>
> Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement are discussed from the perspective of what today's employers are looking for in an applicant. Survey research has shown that employers have preferences as to degree or level of experience most preferred, and personal skills or attributes that may be valuable. Some employers may provide formal training programs while other employers seek specialized vocational or academic training,
>
> Job Outlook for the future refers to the projected growth or decline in the number of persons employed in that occupation based on population trends, turnover rate or competition for jobs by jobseekers entering employment. Whether or not financial constraints due to recession or inflation have an effect is presented,
>
> Earnings information is based on surveys completed by the professional associations or Department of Labor,
>
> Related Occupations that may provide a vehicle into the desired area of employment,
>
> Sources of Additional Information lists National and State professional associations; how to find schools that offer programs and courses in that particular field; or information on licensing requirements (licensing or certification requirements may vary between states), if applicable.

The Florida Occupational Information System (FLOIS) provides occupational supply and demand information to employment, training, and education program planners in Florida. Occupational demand refers to the future demand for a particular occupation. Occupational supply refers to the number of people taking and completing the educational programs to fill the demand. The FLOIS data base is maintained at the Northwest Regional Data Center and Caldwell Data Center in Tallahassee and is updated annually by the FLOIS office (Bureau of Labor Market Information) of the Florida Department of Labor.

The Bureau of Career Development and Educational Improvement uses occupational demand data, average annual openings, and wage data in its printed and software products such as The Guide, Florida VIEW Careers, Florida Career Information Delivery System (FCIDS), and CHOICES. The Bureau of Labor Market Information includes such data as numbers of enrollments and completions from the Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education in its on-line FLOIS database.

*The Guide* is a career and education planning resource, an occupational exploration tool, a directory of Florida schools, and a source of financial aid awards, all-in-one. It is distributed annually to over 275,000 Florida students including every high school junior and senior, students at all state community colleges and vocational technical centers, as well as hundreds of private schools, special programs, and individuals.

*VIEW Careers* is one component of a classroom kit that also contains a *Postsecondary Directory, Financial Aid Book*, and an *Interest Survey*. These materials combine to form a self-awareness and career exploration inventory to help individuals make tentative career decisions based on their interests, goals, and skills.

The *Florida Career Information Delivery System* (FCIDS) is an on-line computer program accessed through the FIRN network to provide career, education and financial aid information. The database files have been designed as information tools for the occupational specialist, counselor, teacher, and administrator.

*CHOICES* is a computerized career and educational exploration system designed to help students develop self-concepts and facilitate career decision making and goal setting. The database files contain detailed information on 1,010 civilian and military careers, a Florida Education File, and Florida postsecondary public and private educational institution listings.

## CONCLUSION

Today's educators, employers, and job seekers are faced with economic shifts, changing demographic trends, and industrial redevelopment. The need for relevant career development and occupational resources has never been greater. The Bureau of Career Development and Educational Improvement shares information with the Bureau of Labor Market Information. The result is a wide range of relevant career development resources and tools that are easily available to you in printed and computerized formats.

## References

*1993-1994 Products Catalog; Publications, Software, Videos, Blueprint Materials.* Bureau of Career Development and Educational Improvement, Division of Vocational, Adult, and Community Education, Department of Education, Florida Education Center, Tallahassee, FL 32399, Phone (800) 342-9271; (904) 488-0400 or Suncom 278-0400.

*Enhanced Guide for Occupational Exploration, The - Descriptions for the 2,500 Most Important Jobs*, 1993, JIST Works Inc., 720 North Park Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46202-3431, Phone (317) 264-3720 $29.95 (paperbound)

*Florida Occupational Information System (FLOIS) User Guide*, 1987, Department of Labor and Employment Security, Division of Labor, Employment and Training, Bureau of Labor Market Information, 200 Hartman Building, 2012 Capital Circle, SE, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0674, Phone: (904) 488-1048

*Occupational Outlook Handbook 1992-93 Edition*, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1990. Atlanta Regional Office, 1371 Peachtree Street, NE, Atlanta, GA 30367, Phone: (404) 347-4416. $16.50 (paperbound).

# RESOURCES

## •Human Resources

- Department of Education Contacts
    - Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education
    - Division of Public Schools
- School District Contacts
    - Blueprint for Career Preparation
    - Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources Systems Contacts
    - Cooperative Consultation Contacts
    - Curriculum-Based Vocational Assessment (CBVA) Contacts

## •Material Resources

- Career Development Product List
- Applied Academics
- Pathways to Your Future
- Employability Skills

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CONTACTS

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## CAREER DEVELOPMENT PRODUCT LIST

*Best Practices for Middle School*
**Objective:** To provide best practices of career development activities for middle grade students with sample lesson plans and resources for teachers in dealing with career development activities.
**Product/Service:** Best Practices are selected career preparation lesson activities and program ideas. They have been selected from many pilot sites for the Blueprint for Career Preparation and additions will be collected, developed, field tested, and distributed over a five-year period. This "living document" is distributed in a looseleaf form that can be copied at the school site for the appropriate teacher. Each activity focuses on the development of one or more of the career competencies of the Blueprint and are suitable for use in most curriculum areas.

*Blueprint Video*
**Objective:** To provide the districts with varied promotional and informational videos of the Blueprint for Career Preparation. It includes the link between career and educational planning, elementary career awareness, employability skills, and teacher recruitment.
**Product/Service:** The Blueprint video contains four segments.

*Career Cruiser*
**Objective:** To assist eighth graders in beginning to think about interests, favorite school subjects and occupations they may be interested in exploring. It is designed to be used as a stand alone product and can also be used in conjunction with "Pathways to Your Future".
**Product/Service:** The Career Cruiser is a career and educational tabloid providing career awareness to middle school students. It is distributed to all eighth grade students in the state.

*CHOICES*
**Objective:** To increase the awareness of personal needs, abilities, and expectations; career alternatives; career decision-making process; and priority-setting.
**Product/Service:** *CHOICES* is a microcomputer software program that contains career and education information. The database contains information on 1,010 occupations, both civilian and military, and a Florida Education File of Florida's public and private postsecondary institutions. In addition, CHOICES also offers a National Education File which lists information on over 4,000 colleges throughout the United States.

*CHOICES CT*
**Objective:** To assist adults in effectively confronting career transitions.
**Product/Service:** *CHOICES CT* is a microcomputer software program for career exploration and counseling. The basic program is identical to CHOICES, with the addition of a Transferable Skills Module. The module can provide career possibilities based on previous work experience.

*CHOICES Jr.*
**Objective:** To demonstrate the impact of self-awareness on the range of career alternatives.
**Product/Service:** CHOICES Jr. is an interactive computerized exploration system for middle-grade students that provides tutorial menus and instruct-

ions to guide students through career exploration activities. The program assists students in achieving greater awareness of personal needs, abilities and expectations. It also increases their knowledge of the world of work, career alternatives, the impact of career decisions upon one's life, and the process of career decision making.

*FCIDS*
**Objective:** To serve as a quick reference for specific information on occupations, educational institutions and programs, financial aid awards, and job openings.
**Product/Service:** The *Florida Career Information Delivery System (FCIDS)* is an on-line computer program accessed through a telephone network to provide career, education, and financial aid information. The three main parts include the Career File, the Education File, and the Financial Aid File. FCIDS also provides current jobs available in Florida as reported by the Florida State Employment Service in the Job Bank File. This part provides information about the job including location, experience required, and level of pay.

*Florida View*
**Objective:** To assist students in developing self-awareness, career awareness, and career decision-making using state career and educational information systems.
**Product/Service:** Florida View consists of several components including The View Careers, PreView, Florida View Interest Survey, Career Book, The Postsecondary Directory, and the Financial Aid Book.

The *Guide*
**Objective:** To provide career, education, and financial aid information to the general population, high school and above.
**Product/Service:** The *Guide* is a career and education planning magazine. It provides information on dozens of various career opportunities, a directory of public and private postsecondary institutions in Florida, and financial aid sources. It is distributed each year to every Florida high school junior and senior and many postsecondary institutions.

The *Game*
**Objective:** To show the relationship between education and income level reinforcing that education can lead to a higher standard of living.
**Product/Service:** The *Game* is a career and education awareness packet with a game and student activities with instructor's guide designed to teach the advantages of staying in school.

*Impact*
**Objective:** To assist students in achieving the middle and high school objectives of the *Blueprint for Career Preparation*.
**Product/Service:** *Impact* is a self-esteem-based skill development program for secondary students. It has 11 components with activities utilizing the circle sessions and other methodologies. Topics include conflict resolution, managing stress, effective communication, and goal setting.

*Insights*
**Objective:** To assist students in carrying out the elementary objectives of the *Blueprint for Career Preparation*.

**Product/Service**: *Insights* is a program to build self-awareness, self-esteem, and career awareness and deals with topics such as improving learning habits, taking pride in work, and dealing with problems.

*The Jungle Survival Guide II*
**Objective**: To provide first-time job seekers with basic job search skills.
**Product/Service**: *The Jungle Survival Guide II* includes basic job-search information in an appealing cartoon format. It covers job search skills including resume writing, approaching potential employers, and interviewing.

*Parents Make the Difference*
**Objective**: To assist parents in being involved in the career decisions of their children.
**Product/Service**: *Parents Make the Difference* is a "train the trainer" workshop designed to help parents become involved in career and education decisions of their children. It includes demographic information, career and education trends, and case histories.

*Pathways to Your Future*
**Objective**: To assist students in setting tentative career goals and in developing a plan to achieve those goals.
**Product/Service**: *Pathways to Your Future* is a career and education planning system to link career goals with educational planning. The program starts with eighth grade students and continues until graduation. It consists of three main parts including the Career Planner Activities, The Florida Computer-Assisted Career Planning System, and the Florida Student Career and Education Planner.

*Program Guide to Career Development*
**Objective**: To assist districts in planning and carrying out the objectives of the *Blueprint for Career Preparation*.
**Product/Service**: The *Program Guide to Career Development* is a planning manual designed to help districts and schools plan a career development program. It focuses on the development of career counseling and presents a model for career counseling interventions.

*Resource Guide for the Blueprint for Career Preparation*
**Objective**: To provide district personnel with sources of information to implement the *Blueprint for Career Preparation*.
**Product/Service**: *The Resource Guide* is a listing of career development books, software, kits, and materials from a variety of state and national sources.

*Technology in the World of Work*
**Objective**: To allow students to explore how computers and other technologies are affecting the world of work.
**Product/Service**: *Technology in the World of Work* is a 12-module series of computer-simulated activities designed for elementary students.

*TIPS*
**Objective**: To promote competencies in finding a job, developing good work habits, and enhancing personal life skills.
**Product/Service**: *TIPS* is a microcomputer software program developed to teach basic employability and life skills to the inexperienced job seeker. It can help build skills to facilitate the transition from school to work, from home to work, and from job to job.

## Applied Academics

Applied Academics refers to the curriculum materials developed through consortia efforts with the Center for Occupational Research and Development (CORD) and the agency for Instructional Technology (AIT): Applied Communication, Applied Mathematics, and Principles of Technology. A fourth set of curriculum materials, Applied Biology/Chemistry, is currently being developed.

The "Applied Academics" focus on teaching average students higher-level concepts in mathematics, science, and communication using applied teaching strategies. An academic concept is presented followed immediately by a hands-on activity which demonstrates how to apply the concept in the "real world." The word problems used in the "Applied Academics" emphasize occupationally relevant applications so students can see that academic skills are required for success on the job.

Though the "Applied Academics" target the average student, some of the materials can be adapted for use in ESE. Diane Hoock, ESE teacher at Palm Beach Gardens High School, is using the calculator modules from Applied Mathematics with her SLD students:

> *"Usually SLD students dislike math. It's a major chore to get them to work. Using the calculator--a scientific calculator!--to solve everyday real work problems has caused a tremendous uplift in their attitudes and grades. Teaching a problem with the use of the calculator has made problem solving more attainable... Using these materials in my class has had a great impact on their self esteem."*

Vocational and academic teachers are finding each other one of the richest resources for developing applied methodology.

In some pilot districts teams of academic and vocational teachers have met and developed common lesson plans using applied strategies. These teams bring applied techniques to academic classes and skills to vocational classes.

Articulation: Teamwork is also essential in articulation. Blueprint sites identify teams from feeder pattern schools to focus on transition from one school to the next and reinforce the sense of continuity in programs, such as career development, that carry over from one level to the next. Counties are looking closely at articulation from high school to postsecondary, developing programs with course credit that can carry from high school to vo-tech or community college, and vo-tech and community college to a university.

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## Pathways to Your Future

*Pathways to Your Future* has been designed to assist students in setting tentative career goals and developing an educational plan to achieve those goals. Students begin the process during their middle school years and continue it into adulthood. It has been developed to support the objectives of the *Blueprint for Career Preparation* and it involves cooperation between educators and parents to achieve the common goal of preparing our youth to enter the world of work and continue their postsecondary education. The program consists of three interrelated parts including:

> *Career Planner Activities* is a student workbook containing a sequentially planned curriculum to guide students through career orientation and exploration. It culminates in developing a four year plan of study for their high school program.
>
> *Computer-Assisted Career Planning System* develops sample programs of studies which meet students' career goals incorporating classes that are available at their articulating high schools.
>
> *Florida Student Career and Education Planner* is a folder designed to assist students in relating career and education planning. Students begin entering information about themselves during the eighth grade and update it yearly as they prepare to register for classes for the following year.

The awareness of the world of work and relating career and educational planning is of vital importance to exceptional education students. These students often have the least awareness of their own capabilities as well as limited awareness of possible career and educational opportunities. Therefore, *Pathways to Your Future* can offer a very significant opportunity for them to increase their understanding about themselves, develop decision-making skills, and understand the relationship between general career goals and educational plans.

Many county and state leaders in exceptional education have expressed interest in implementing *Pathways to Your Future* for exceptional education students. Since one of the basic tenets of the *Blueprint for Career Preparation* and the School Improvement Program is to increase student performance of all students, the materials have been developed to be implemented for exceptional education students with only slight modifications. They also can be used in conjunction with the ESE Individual Educational Planning Process to foster the parent involvement in career and education planning for their children.

## Employability Skills

Employability Skills (ES) are the skills that enhance a person's ability to get and keep a job. These skills apply to all occupations and all levels of jobs. They are not job preparatory. These skills cover a range from understanding one's own interests and skills in order to choose a career, to knowing how to apply for a job, to get along in the workplace and manage personal finances and behavior. Teaching employability skills has long been a part of exceptional student education, vocational education and career development. Certain skills, such as resume writing, have long been included in academic subject area instruction. Recently business has encouraged educators to take a new look at employability skills to expand the content to address the changing workplace and the changing needs of employees for prejob skills. Business also is urging schools to make employability skills instruction available to all students.

The traditional content of ES materials includes career exploration and self assessment, information on how to locate and apply for jobs, including resume writing and analyzing qualifications, overview of what to expect on the first day of the job, standard safety and health practices and information on changing jobs including how to resign. Personal finances and personal lifestyle that affects job performance have also been included.

New areas in ES have been identified. Many have to do with the new workplace, changes in technology, changes in the economic forecast, changes in management and work styles within business and industry. The new workplace will require communication skills, team work and cooperative decision making and the ability to train and retrain as technology and jobs change. As American businesses change from industrial to service the type of skills employees need change. People need stronger basic skills, the ability to enter postsecondary schools and training and the ability to analyze and solve problems.

Some of the new prejob skills that business has identified require a different approach by educators. Cooperative work skills, analytical skills and advanced basic skills cannot be taught piecemeal or in isolated curricula. Schools are examining strategies for infusing these key skills throughout the curriculum, kindergarten through adult. Increasing student performance in basic skills requires new strategies in a comprehensive approach to the academic subject areas. In Florida, the *Blueprint for Career Preparation* is providing a format for piloting many of these approaches.

The Employability Skills Workbook Series, published by the Department of Education, is currently under revision. Department staff are adding a new book to the series called *The Changing Workplace*. The other titles are *Choosing an Occupation*, *Your Job Search*, *Applying for a Job*, *On the Job*, *Personal Finances* and *Job Changes*. A performance based instructional series, the books provide knowledge and performance objectives, individualized instruction, teacher resource suggestions and quizzes. In addition, an Exceptional Student Education Supplemental Teachers' Guide is being developed. The supplemental guide will provide suggestions and blackline activities to use as additional reinforcement. This guide was written by a select group of Florida ESE and vocational educators to provide innovative, hands on activities for the classroom. The material that addresses skills such as math and communications, cooperative work skills and problem solving provide reinforcement for all the learning that the student achieved throughout school in these areas.

The series, originated in the 1970's, was extensively reviewed and validated in the field. Much of the series has not been changed. Many of the objectives are valid and current. The primary change in the series has been to add new material. The complete series will be extensively reviewed by business and industry, field tested by educators, and disseminated statewide.

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